



Apollo and Daphne (Bernini)

Technate Information Essay Book. Compiled and edited by Skip Sievert

Essay & article contributions by Pam Gill - Celeste Smith - Lois M. Scheel - Lila S. Wagner - Alma Mawson - Stella Block - Bette Hiebert - Helen Marian - Hellen Spitler - Lorraine Rhode - and Pam Edwards. The scientific social design of the Technical Alliance is located in the last two chapters of the Technocracy Study Course.

The following 39 essays are a compilation of information briefs and articles written by women.

This information is open source. Technate design offers the viable alternative to the present Price System method of operation. Presented by **TNAT The North American Technate**

Women ! The first article here is by Stella K. Block

1980 - The last by Pam Gill presented Jan. 2008

Published in:

The Northwest Technocrat, No. 281, October, 1980. January 2008 TNAT.

- Article Reprint
- [The North American Technate TNAT](#)
- [Technate Design North America » home](#)
- [TNAT info. Technate Design](#)

Technate design offers to the women of North America a goal that is really worth fighting for. The Technate offers equal incomes for all -- not merely equal pay for equal work. There would be equal income as a right of citizenship. The goal of equal rights under the Price System is just not big enough. The amendment for equal rights falls far, far short of what this Continent has to offer through the social design proposed by the Technical Alliance. [History and Purpose of Technocracy. Howard Scott.](#)

Let it be stated at the outset that fighting for equality under the Price System is the epitome of futility -- in short, it is not worth the effort. The fight for the equal rights amendment (ERA) is jousting at windmills. Proof? Women won the right to vote in August, 1920; the equal rights movement started shortly thereafter and has continued to the present time -- six decades! The U.S. Congress finally passed the equal rights amendment in 1972, but ratification by the states still has not occurred.

Opposition to the equal rights amendment has come not only from men but also from very articulate and determined women who fear social change as much as do men. What neither side realizes is that social change cannot be legislated. It cannot be stopped. It has already happened. It was in the same six decades during which women have been battling for equal rights legislation that the greatest social change in the history of the world has taken place. Politics hadn't a thing to do with it -- except perhaps as an impediment.

THE WAY IT WAS

At the turn of the century, net production of electric energy was 5,969 million kilowatt-hours. Very few households were wired for electricity. There were no gadgets such as washing machines. It was the old washboard and copper boiler on a wood-burning stove that were used. Human muscle was the source of power. There were few vacuum cleaners as we know them today. Only the affluent had anything resembling power equipment in the homes -- operated by servants (female). The majority of women lived in rural areas or small towns serving the farms.

Clothes were homemade on a foot-pedaled sewing machine or sewn by hand. The more affluent, of course, had seamstresses come in perhaps twice a year to do the family sewing. Sewing was one of the very few occupations open to women at that time. Marriage was the primary goal of most women. Meals were cooked on a wood-or coal-burning stove. Every day and every waking moment of every day was filled with household chores to do. Monday was washday, with the water carried in buckets from a well -- and with the clothes out on

the line before breakfast! Tuesday was ironing day, with the irons heated on the stove (winter and summer). The clothes were cotton, many heavily starched.

Fridays were cleaning days -- with broom and scrub brush, on hands and knees, to get the wooden floors sparkling clean. Saturday was baking day -- home-baked bread to last the week. In between, there were children to care for, gardening to be done and even field work when necessary, if the family lived on a farm. There was precious little time for contemplating or worrying about ``rights." Women, then, were just too busy and too tired at day's end to do much about it. It was a dawn-to-dusk workday. There was no time for a career outside the home except for perhaps teaching for the unmarried. This was the time when the adage of ``Women's place is in the home" held sway, simply because there was no choice.

It was not unusual for women to bear 10, 12 or more children. The state of hygiene and medical help being what it was at that time, not all children survived to maturity. Birth control was something that was only whispered about and not available to most women. A woman, generally, was worn out by the age of 35. It was also not unusual for a man to have had three or four wives in his lifetime.

Voting would not, could not, have helped women, then, any more than it is helping them now. [Technate design. Some basic facts.](#)

THE INTRODUCTION OF CHANGE

By 1920, the use of electricity increased almost tenfold -- to 56,559 million kilowatt-hours. That was the year the 20th amendment was ratified, following several decades of women fighting for the right just to vote. It was a very dubious victory, in keeping with the history of political chicanery. The inventor who developed the small electric motor did more for women's liberation than all the rhetoric of all the politicians since George Washington's time. The development of the small electric motor paved the way for the mass production of vacuum cleaners, washing machines, beaters, and a myriad of other gadgets that are taken for granted today. Social change was on the way with a vengeance.

At the turn of the century, the family, for the most part, was a self-contained unit. The man worked outside the home; he was the sole bread winner; the woman stayed home taking care of the home and children, completely dependent upon the husband and father for economic sustenance.

She, in turn, provided him with free services of a cook, laundress, seamstress, gardener, housekeeper, nurse, teacher and mistress. They were mutually dependent upon each other. It was all hard, unremitting labor, but more or less independent of outside needs.

Most everybody was in the same situation. With the development of cheap electricity, homes were soon wired, eliminating many tedious chores for women (and for men, too). Electric stoves began to make their appearance, eliminating wood-chopping. Expanding industry demanded greater record-keeping. With the invention of the typewriter and other technological developments in the home and in industry, women began to flock to offices and factories. In 1950, the total production of electric energy was 388,674 million kilowatt-hours; this increased to 844,188 million kilowatt-hours by the end of the decade. The family, as it was known at the turn of the century, had changed drastically.

It no longer was a self-contained unit. Small towns around the periphery of large cities became ``bedroom" communities. That is, people living in the small towns obtained jobs in the large cities and commuted back and forth. A home or apartment became, to a large

extent, merely a gathering place for family members in the evening. Entertainment, work and schooling were obtained outside the home.

SOCIAL CHANGE

Social change, brought about by the installation of energy-saving devices in the home, the farm, the factory, is in full swing. Today, our use of electricity is astronomical. Voting had nothing to do with it. Thomas Davenport, of Brandon, Vt., patented the first electric motor in 1837. Nicola Tesla developed the electric motor to where it could be used universally. These men were apolitical. They simply had an idea and they developed it. The commercial use and exploitation was made by Price System promoters, not for the liberation of anybody or any class, but because it was profitable. In the process, both men and women have been ``liberated" from the back-breaking toil that obtained from early history.

The irony, here, is that the vested interests that promote labor-saving gadgets for profit are mostly the same vested interests that promote the insult of women being treated as second-class citizens. Their wage scales, as compared to men's, for the same type or work, attest to that.

EQUALITY

Technocracy offers to the women of North America a goal that is really worth fighting for. Technocracy offers equal incomes for all -- not merely equal pay for equal work. There would be equal income regardless of the work, be it menial or cerebral. The goal of equal rights under this Price System is just not big enough. Where do today's feminists want equality? In business? In politics? Both these endeavors are legal, lawful, confidence games. A politician operates from one election to the other; a businessman operates on the profit basis -- if it pays, he will support almost anything. The financial balance sheet is his criterion. The amendment for equal rights falls far, far short of what this Continent has to offer through the social design proposed by Technocracy. After six decades of fighting for equal rights, women are still discriminated against in the job market. Sexual harassment is one of the recurring complaints of women who have succeeded in invading traditionally male occupations. Fearful of losing their foothold, after years of schooling and preparation, women either submit or work in less than ideal conditions.

In a Technocracy, both men and women would be free to give their attention to the job, without fear of intimidation. If a person were transferred or demoted, the move would not affect his or her income; it would be guaranteed for life.

Women would also be freed of having to work a ``double shift." That is, after a day at the office or factory, women now generally still have to do the housework, cook or whatever; if they have a family, children, it is doubly hard. No better picture has been drawn of this situation than the one by Ann Berk (My Turn, Newsweek, September 29, 1980): ``Most working women in their 30s and 40s are physically exhausted and emotionally drained, hysteria nibbling around the edges of their lives. They're the ones who still believed in having babies, who were taught to please men and sometimes even enjoyed it. And while they no longer worry about floors you can eat off, they find it hard to shelve their children's needs and the desires, however quaint in 1980, of their men. Those in their 20s who think they have a lock on sanity, because they've decided against having children and permanent attachments, may wake up when they're 50, if they haven't succumbed to a heart attack or lung cancer, to find themselves curiously empty.

`` However women play it, there are hard choices to be made that all entail loss -- and while that career clock is ticking away, so is the lifeline to the rest of the territory that remains steadfastly theirs. For babies still usually turn to their mothers, women still usually keep the children after a divorce, do the cooking, the cleaning and laundry and decorate the house and call the plumber. There are still ballet lessons and piano and softball practice, dental appointments and teacher conferences, and no one has yet found a way to eliminate adolescence.

The beat goes on -- it's merely in double time now." This is the price that our present social system extracts from one segment of the population. The march of technology has pushed women out of their traditional, historic roles, but the Price System has not `` moved over," has not made way for the social change that technological innovations have created.

MYTHS OF THE PRICE SYSTEM

It must be borne in mind that the Price System is a system of disadvantage. So long as it exists, so long as we try to operate under a Price System, someone, or some group, or race, will be exploited by the small minority that has succeeded under the rules of the game. Women have long been on the receiving end of this system of disadvantage. Men have promoted this, to a large extent, because of a belief that women are a threat to their jobs. In a Technocracy, this threat will not exist. Many myths regarding the relationships between men and women have already been laid to rest by the implacable march of technology.

Up until the 17th century it was known by all the most learned men and the ecclesiastics that men were the dominant factor in procreation. In some societies it was thought that men were the sole 'factor and women merely incubators. Then the microscope was developed! Although it took a couple more centuries or so of trial and error, (refining of the lenses to make it more accurate and workable), in 1854 someone observed the fusion of the ovum and sperm (this in the sperm and egg of a frog!). So, there was the irrefutable evidence of the female being equally responsible and a full partner in the creation of another life. (In some circles it was even conceded that the female might, after all, have a soul!).

This startling development (fusion of the sperm and ovum) shattered ten thousand years of ignorance, superstition and bigotry regarding women.

Unfortunately, new myths developed which were just as denigrating to women: it was felt that women's brains were too fragile for higher education and that women were unable to fend for themselves; they must have a man to take care of them. It was held that women were unfulfilled unless they were pregnant and caring for children. `` Barefoot and pregnant" was only one of many derogatory terms expressing this view. With the world filling up with people, both men and women are waking up to the fact that procreation, unchecked, threatens the very survival of mankind.

The myth that this is a `` man's world" and woman merely an extension of the male, a subordinate being, is being shattered by the march of technology. Also, the march of technology is obliterating the line between `` woman's work" and `` man's work." Women are not inferior, nor are they superior to men; they are different, but of equal importance. They are both energy-consuming biological entities. In a Technocracy, no differentiation will be made as to sex, as far as incomes are concerned. Neither the male nor female will be penalized for being male or female.

The really hard work is done by extraneous energy today. Muscle power is on the way out as far as having to make a living by it. A restructuring of the entire social mechanism would

eliminate many problems; they just would not exist. Many jobs for which women now compete will be eliminated -- advertising, for one. One of the most powerful mediums in which the myth of women's inferiority is promulgated is television commercials and programs. As Kathleen Newland has pointed out (Sisterhood of Man, W.W. Norton & CO.), they usually depict women as "economically and psychologically dependent, deceitful, incompetent, indecisive, foolish and cruel, or competitive toward other women." In another study, women in ads were almost exclusively portrayed as sex objects or "moronic housewives obsessed by cleanliness."

Huckstering being one of the mainstays of the Price System, it would be impossible to eliminate this bias, because it is too profitable. Given the number of hours devoted to TV viewing by the majority of people, it is easy to understand the difficulty of changing the image the world has regarding women. To quote from a report in the Unesco Courier of July, 1980, written by Margaret Gallagher, "In many ways mass media systems are a reflection, in microcosm, of distribution of power and control . . . In the sense that cultural agents of institutions contribute to the socialization process within systems which are directed by political and economic imperatives, the mass media's role is primarily to reinforce definitions and identities set in a framework constructed for, and by, men."

In other words, the status quo will be maintained as long as it is profitable. Only by elimination of the entire system of disadvantage can both men and women develop to their full potential.

This does not mean that there would be no conflicts between the sexes. Far from it. Given the orneriness and cussedness of the human race, there would still be much for the Social Sequences to do in this field. This would be a special sequence that would concern itself with human relations. Although our present judiciary system presides over conflicts between humans, the litigation is over property rights, for the most part -- attorneys battling each other in a "court of law." Under the Price System, justice is on the side of the most money. The personnel in a Technocracy would have no such restrictions. Any conflict between humans would be dealt with by the most objective and impersonal methods available. Competing for jobs will not be a point of conflict except only so far as ability goes. Women and men will be trained and given every opportunity to develop whatever skills they have. They will not receive an income for what they know or do, but because they are citizens of this Continent.

A PROPER GOAL

The energies of women, today, can be directed toward the elimination of a system that uses the most flagrant, obscene processes of wasteful destruction of resources to maintain itself. The evidence is before us in many ways -- and tolerated by men and women alike. Women have been as short-sighted as men (equally so!) when it comes to interpreting the events that are unfolding before our eyes: the disappearing species of birds and animals of various kinds; the disappearance of our most valuable prime farmland; the disappearance and ravaging of forests all over the world -- for the sake of profits; the exploding populations that make more and more demands on the world's dwindling resources. Women have pursued the same short-sighted goals as men -- jobs, possessions, prestige.

Paradoxical as it sounds, unless we do institute a system of scientific governance, a scientific method of production and distribution on this Continent, and soon, we shall not even have any descendants to study us the way we now study our ancient ancestors. We shall have to institute a system that treats all humans equally, male and female; black,

brown, white or purple; not especially because of any humanitarian reasons, but because it is too costly and too wasteful of resources to maintain this Price System.

Technocracy offers a higher standard of living than has been imagined by even the most affluent, with none of the pressures or the need to be wary of someone taking it away that exists today. In a Technocracy, there would be no "second class" citizens because all incomes would be equal. And the irony is that we had better do this or else our very survival will be in jeopardy. We can no longer afford to continue to indulge ourselves in the wasteful degradation of our resources for frivolous, throw-away junk.

We must institute a system wherein only the optimum design will be used, whether it be in cars, homes or household equipment of whatever kind -- designs that will last. It can be done. And, for the first time in the history of the world, women will be accepted for what they are: part and parcel of the human race on an equal basis with men. [The Energy Certificate/Energy Accounting.Technate system.](#)

World Already Beyond Its Carrying Capacity

Lois M. Scheel

1994

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletter, Nov. 1994, No. 129

"God has created a world big enough for all the lives he wishes to be born. If there is a child that you don't want or can't feed or educate, give that child to me."

Mother Teresa, 1994 World Population Conference, Cairo

It is estimated that hunger has already become a worldwide problem with about 1 in 5, or 20 percent of the world's population going without sufficient nourishment to sustain life.

The world's population, now at 5.6 billion, is likely to reach 8.5 billion by the year 2025 and 10 billion by 2050. While all continents are showing an increase in population, most of the growth is occurring in those areas of the world with *developing* and *underdeveloped* countries, which are among the poorest of nations.

It would take gargantuan measures to control and reduce the population growth that is taking place in the world today. Those vested interests that include businesses, politicians,

and ecclesiastical organizations and groups (the vanguard of the status quo) are not making the task any easier. Regardless, when considering that the resources of this one and only earth are finite (and rapidly being depleted) nations have no other alternative except to take those measures that will stem population growth. Otherwise, physical factors and limitations will do it for them. The consequences of not doing anything would be catastrophic. [The Technate, An Idea For Now Stephen L. Doll.](#)

Wired For Change

Stella K. Block

1996

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 3rd quarter 1996, No. 321

If there is any lingering doubt in anyone's mind about technology bringing about social change, he or she should peruse the 65th anniversary issue of the CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC Magazine, November-December, 1995 issue. It is a graphic pictorial and written evidence of the changes brought about by just two technological innovations: the telephone and the telegraph. The editorial in itself is a revelation of how swiftly technological innovations were accepted and incorporated into everyday life. As the editorial stated, ``The railroad may have physically united Canada but it was the telegraph that literally called the nation into being."

The first transmission of a message by telegraph was made in 1846 -- which triggered a mad scramble to ``wire" the whole nation. This was a message transmitted from Hamilton to Toronto -- such a short distance compared to the transmission of information via satellite today!!

Leafing through the pages of the magazine is like taking a walk through history of the technological progression that has occurred on this Continent. As stated above, the first telegraph message was sent in 1846 between Hamilton and Toronto. In 1858 the first transatlantic cable was laid from Valentia Bay, Ireland to Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. Alexander Graham Bell designed the telephone at Brantford, Ont., in 1874. In 1876 Bell made the world's first long-distance calls between Ontario communities of Mount Pleasant, Brantford and Paris.

The anniversary issue of the magazine is replete with pictures of the early beginnings of the so-called ``information revolution" that we are witnessing today: One photo shows a row of approximately 15 to 20 couriers on bicycles ready to take off carrying messages outside a Montreal office (1920). Another picture shows a row of telephone operators, ``centrals" as

they were called: ``In 1907 when 21 women operated the Vancouver central switchboard for a population of 65,000, a private telephone line cost \$1.00 a month. Customers called ``central" by turning a handle, operators then connected them to their number."

The telephone and telegraph were accepted with great speed -- quoting one segment of the text, ``Telephones were all the rage in Canada in the early 20th century, which meant much employment for workers who erected the wires and poles needed to accommodate an ever-burgeoning demand. In the one-year period of 1912 alone, the number of Canadians with phones grew by about 19 percent by 1913. When the population was 7.5 million, one in 16 Canadians had the newfangled device." This text was accompanied by a photograph of the method used at that time to erect a telephone pole -- between twenty and thirty men were involved in raising the huge pole.

Yes, in the beginning, the growth of technology did indeed create employment. By contrast, how are poles erected today? Huge cranes powered by extraneous energy do the work of a multitude of men, with just one operating the controls in a comfortable cab. The text of two photographs reveals the very essence of ``technological progression": ``Each strand of a fibre optic cable can transmit from Toronto to Vancouver in one-tenth of a second -- the equivalent of the information in a 32-volume encyclopedia. By contrast, two intertwined threads of spaghetti-like copper wire, held by a technician with the Saquenay-Quebec Telephone Company in 1948, could transmit a maximum of just 12 conversations simultaneously.

A few words of explanation in regard to ``fibre optics." According to the text: ``Canada's first coast-to-coast fibre optic cable -- the world's longest -- was completed on March 13, 1990, by Stentor -- an alliance of the country's major telephone companies. Last summer, Stentor finished a parallel back-up line: every 400 kilometres, a cross-link-rung of high-performance fibre cable joins the two lines so that if one breaks, data is automatically rerouted to the other without any loss of service. Thus continues a long tradition of cross-Canada cabling that began with the telegraph.

``Fibre optic cable is made of fine strands of glass along which information is transmitted, using pulses of light. A fibre the thickness of a human hair can deliver 32,000 simultaneous conversations, or 1,000 billion bits per second, of audio, video or data signals."

In 1880, the Niagara Falls telephone convention adopted ``hello" as the standard salutation. The first telegraph line across Canada was laid along-side the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885. Samuel Morse had invented the electric telegraph in 1844 -- dots and dashes of this code became universal and it signaled a new age in meteorology, among other things. And - in 1890, Sir Sanford Fleming standardized time zones which were accepted around the world. Up until that time, there had been no need for such notions. Prior to the invention of the telegraph, news could only travel as fast as a human on horseback could carry it. Before Samuel Morse invented his message machine, transportation was only as fast as a human could travel. Suddenly, with the Morse code, word could be transmitted instantly! Distance was no longer a major problem. But the social implications of the development of the telegraph was not recognized for the dynamic influence it really was -- not any more than any other technological invention before that, or since. But the social fabric of the hand-tool, hand-toil age was doomed.

Interspersed with the text about the ``wiring" of Canada, are pictures of the workers stringing wires of the telephone and telegraph -- even one of a park warden using his horse as a ladder to ``repair" a broken telegraph wire attached to a tree. This was part of the added duties of the park wardens out in the wilds of Canada at that time -- not only looking out for fires, but keeping an eye on the slender wire of communication.

The phrase "history repeats itself" can very well apply to the feverish activity regarding the "Internet." In the early days of the telephone and telegraph, many companies were formed, each one vying for customers. Time revealed this to be an inefficient way to communicate. Eventually the small individual telephone and telegraph companies were bought up and consolidated into trans-Canadian enterprises. So too, did the "Morse Code" become obsolete in the wake of "wireless" transmission of the radio, etc.

The computerization of the entire Continent is developing at a breakneck speed. Just about every publication carries articles on the "Internet" with various opinions of observations by pundits and others. A whole new language has evolved with the evolution of the computers. Dictionaries are now available that are as thick as Webster's, with words that Webster never heard of. All evolved from the electronic revolution we are witnessing. Every business, be it doctors' offices, groceries, gas stations, schools, restaurants, retail shops, airlines, hospitals with a computer in every patient room, and any other endeavor you want to name, is computerized -- because they have to be.

Howard Scott, the founder of Technocracy, stated, many years ago, that the public would be dragged kicking and screaming into the new world of technology. We are witnessing that today. Social change has taken place, but the human animal, being a creature of habit, is still clinging desperately to the same old concepts of yesterday. There is no turning back, and how we survive in the next few years will depend on how well we understand what is happening to our world.

The North American Continent is the logical leader of the coming age. It is the only area that has the physical components to establish a social system that will be in complete harmony with the new age of technology.

What Family Values?

Stella Block

1994

Published in:

- The Northwest Technocrat, 4th quarter 1994, No. 337

The brouhaha over Murphy Brown (a fictional character) having a baby out of wedlock was the nadir of silliness. The Vice-President of the United States (!) in his zeal to defend the values of "family" life embroiled himself in the antics of a fictional TV program! This in the "enlightened" 1990s!

During many centuries any female having a baby out of wedlock was ostracized. The rules were very strict: no sex before marriage! -- For women! Virginity was a virtue prized above all else. The fear of pregnancy kept the girls "nice." For the males? That was different. After all it was the males who made the rule in the first place -- back in the Middle Ages.

During the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s this rule has been shattered. Teenage pregnancies are now out of control. Millions of babies are being born who will never know who their father is. But diehard conservatives, clergy, politicians (such as the former Vice-President of the United States) are still longing for that supposedly ideal of the "nuclear family" consisting of the husband, the "breadwinner," the wife who stayed home and took care of the house and children. This was depicted in commercials and TV "sitcoms" of various types. Ads portrayed the "ideal family" as a man and woman, two children -- a boy (older), with a baseball glove on one hand, and a girl, clutching a doll in her arms.

This depicted very graphically the different conditioning the two children received. The boy was taught the usual "manly" things, while the girl was conditioned from childhood that her place would be "in the home." The focus was on the dominant white middle-class population; all others were ignored. The African- American, the Asian-American, the Native Indian-American, and the Mexican- American were not portrayed.

The concept of the "nuclear family" took centuries to evolve. It wasn't until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that paintings, sculptures, etc., depicting "family scenes" -- men, women and "small people," presumably children, began to circulate. Even the concept of "childhood" had to wait centuries before children were allowed to be "children." It is only in recent times that childhood has been extended into the late teens and early twenties. During the middle ages, children were thrust into adult life almost as soon as they could walk. They were required to do certain chores and participated in the adult life around them. Social stratification was very strict; clothes were a symbol of your station in life.

Children of the well-to-do were sent to other households to be "educated" and in turn accepted other families' children for education in their homes.

The heyday of the "nuclear" family -- man, wife and their children probably occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries. The man was the "head" of the family; this was supported by the mores and folkways of the time. The clergy, business men and the politicians all supported it. There was a very good reason why this concept of "family" was supported -- the concept of property ownership. There was a time back in the Middle Ages when men and women could hold property separately -- each could buy and sell without consulting any one. But as the "family" concept evolved, it became easier to handle if property were to be under the control of the "man of the house." This concept of ownership eventually extended to wife and children -- all owned by the man. "The man of the house" was the breadwinner; mother stayed home -- full time, taking care of the children and home. The man, as the "breadwinner," was free to mingle and be in contact with outside influences; the wife was necessarily confined to the four walls of the "home." This arrangement was not questioned until extraneous energy reared its head in the form of Watts' steam engine (1776). Other technological innovations followed beginning in the 18th century.

Electricity brought a major revolution into the concept of "home." The vacuum cleaner, the electric stove, the automatic washer and dryer, and the dishwasher were a boon to housewives.

But, it left them with time on their hands, and the exodus into the workplace began. They too could work outside the home. Thus began the disintegration of the "ideal family." This was not done by any conscious effort on any body's part, but the steady decline of the time

rate of doing work by the use of extraneous energy applied to the means whereby people made their living pushed social change so inexorably that these changes seemed to take place without anyone being aware of what was happening.

Divorces were beginning to become commonplace as early as 1840 and have increased ever since. The number of households consisting of husband, wife and children had fallen from 40% to 26% in two decades. Today, in most households, both parents work; "latch-key" children are almost the norm. During the 1950s we witnessed the last gasp of the Victorian ideal of "family values." With the development of the "Pill" (medical technology) women no longer feared pregnancies, and the "sexual revolution" of the 1960s and 1970s was launched which knocked the concept of "virginity" into a cocked hat. With millions of children being born without a "father," how is the concept of "property" going to be maintained?

The people who are advocating a return to the old-fashioned values of the Victorian "family" are blind to the reality of today's social conditions.

The physical conditions that permitted the development of the "nuclear family" no longer exist. The use of extraneous energy has changed the environment to such an extent that it has made the concept irrelevant and obsolete. Divorce and remarriages have spawned an entirely different combination of "family" life: As the divorced couples re-marry, they each bring their own children into the household, plus their former in-laws, new in-laws and their offspring and other relatives of various kinds and genders. This kind of "extended" family never existed before. And there are other combinations that are vying for attention and acceptance into the concept of "family:" Homosexual couples; lesbian couples; single individuals with "live-in" partners and other combinations with people of similar tastes, et cetera, et cetera!

The above recombination of what constitutes "family" is keeping social historians and economic sociologists scratching their heads to attach a label to this new kind of "family." Some call it "postindustrial," some call it "postmodern," and others have much less flattering terms to describe the ferment of what is going on. Whether we like it or not, it has happened: social change is here -- now. The end is not yet in sight and we cannot go back. The concept of "family values" has gone the way of the small family farm, the slide rules, soda fountains in drug stores and wedding night virginity.

But -- we haven't "seen nothin' yet!" Wait until the computer age hits us with full force. Already its effects are being felt in every phase of our society. Technocracy's technological design is the only concept that has kept pace with the fast changing social climate that has been brought in by the use of extraneous energy.

Welfare As Most People Don't Know It

Lois M. Scheel

1996

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletter, Aug. 1996, No. 150

What's wrong with this food stamp picture?

In a letter to the local paper, a male shopper writes: ``Earlier today I was going through the line in a local supermarket when I noticed a young man behind me sipping on a drink. He was about 25 years old, a strapping young man who could have been a model for a body-building magazine. I heard the check-out lady tell him the drink was 82 cents. He gave her a \$1 food stamp and pocketed the 18 cents change. As I left the store, I saw him get in a rather late model sports car and drive on down the road. Why is it I have difficulty with this scene?"

Because, Mr. Shopper, you look down on this young food-stamp recipient as one of those welfare cheats you are supporting with your hard-earned tax dollars, but what about the big welfare gougers! You made no mention of them. We have corporate welfare and military welfare and, of course, political welfare, all embracing those who have it made in the financial world and who usually cry the loudest against social programs for the needy.

Georgia Rep. Cynthia McKinney says that Corporations have seen their share of the nation's tax burden reduced from 32 percent in 1952 to 9 percent in 1992.

Norman Solomon, columnist for *Creators Syndicate, Inc.* writes: ``Only 10 percent of the U.S. Treasury's revenue is from `corporate income taxes.' In contrast, 68 percent, a whopping \$1 trillion, pours in from `personal income taxes' or `Social Security, Medicare, and unemployment and other retirement taxes.'"

``...The key welfare program known as AFDC—Aid to Families With Dependent Children—accounts for just 1 percent of the federal budget. In fact, the IRS reports, if you add up all that the U.S. government spends on AFDC, Medicaid and food stamps plus 'supplemental security income and related programs', you'll get a grand total of 12 percent of the federal budget. Another 6 percent is devoted to health research and public health programs, unemployment compensation, assisted housing and social services.

``Meanwhile, military spending soaks up 19 percent of federal outlays, not counting veterans' benefits. Nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars is going to the Pentagon each day. For firms with military contracts, the Defense Department is a gigantic cash cow." Peter DeFazio of Oregon noted that ``wasteful Pentagon spending" amounts to the largest discretionary spending category in the entire federal budget.

Another perk for the military is promoting officers just about to retire to increase their pensions, which are based on the highest rank they have held, and awarding disability allowances even if the disability resulted from a nonservice-related activity, such as shooting yourself in the foot in a hunting accident.

And military personnel can retire early with healthy pensions, go on to other jobs and collect additional pensions after retirement plus collecting their Social Security entitlements. One military high-ranking officer was hired as head of the Red Cross in the 1950s at \$55,000 a year, which made a substantial addition to his ample military retirement pension. (How

much does the Red Cross pay its top honcho today? Elizabeth Dole, who is presently on leave as president of the Red Cross, gets \$200,000 a year.) And how can a non-profit organization afford to pay such lucrative salaries? From donations? No wonder the Red Cross charges so much for *donated* blood. By the way, even though Dole retired from the Senate, he still gets a \$100,000 congressional pension—under the munificent pension plan that Dole and his colleagues established for themselves at taxpayers' expense.

Taxpayers say little about welfare for huge corporations, including big farmers, timber companies, and oil conglomerates, the latter being allowed to set our oil and gas prices as well; they say even less about welfare for the military or hefty perks for politicians, both active and retired; and where is citizen rage when strip miners can buy government land for peanuts, extract the metals and minerals and then go on to putting that land to some other money-making venture while jumping through their tax loopholes.

With corporations, welfare is called a subsidy—which means, according to Webster, a gift of public money to private industry. There is no such euphemism for people in need of financial help; welfare, to most people not on it, means an underserved handout.

Yes, taxpayers are overly tolerant regarding welfare for the rich, but just let someone spend 82 cents on a cold drink with a dollar food stamp and pocket the change and afterwards drive away in a fairly late-model sports car, and they jump up and down and write letters to the editor. It seems that social priorities in this country are a bit askew.

Facing Facts in the War on Drugs

Lois M. Scheel

1996

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletters, Feb. 1996, No. 144

This article is commentary on an article by David Nyhan of the Boston Globe. Permission to reprint to the Internet has not been obtained, so only Lois Scheel's commentary appears here.

REMOVE THE PROFIT

Mr. Nyhan makes an interesting point, one that has been bandied around for several years. Remove the profit from illegal drugs, and the problem will disappear practically overnight. Gone would be the pushers. Gone would be the reason for their existence. Without the pushers, there would be fewer drug addicts.

The drug criminals have traded one narcotic for another--illegal booze for illegal drugs. Prohibition of alcohol in the early part of this century created a lively bunch of gangsters who would just as soon blow your head off as look at you. And prohibition did not stop people from drinking alcoholic beverages. Say "no" and the product becomes that much more intriguing. People were drinking rotgut booze, wood alcohol included, which caused some imbibers to go blind. Others had stills set up in their bathtubs. Hidden back rooms in business establishments kept people supplied with liquor at a hefty price, which they were willing to pay. Prohibition probably did more to encourage people to get started drinking than any other factor. There were plenty of "pushers" of booze around to drum up business.

When Franklin Delano Roosevelt repealed the prohibition statute, the downsized booze criminals merely found another illegal product to make billions off of: drugs. And these drug lords would just as soon blow your head off as look at you.

So why doesn't our government consult its own history to find the solution to the drug war? Could it be that our government is involved in the drug trade? That all these drug busts are only a smoke screen to help convince citizens that something positive is being done to curb the drug trade? And are drug busts with their subsequent prison terms just one more way to control the masses?

In 1981 Mayor Ferre of Miami, Florida, said:

``Miami is the only place in the United States that's going to escape major recessions, and the reason -- you really have to be honest about it -- goes back to two things: the drug cash flow that comes in and impacts the whole community. And number two, the increased centralization of trade, commerce, and banking in Miami toward the Caribbean and Central and South America." At that time, drug-smuggling was South Florida's number one industry, even above tourism, and undoubtedly it still is.

If this idea of legalizing drugs would curb drug crimes, wouldn't removing the profit from everything else have the same effect on all other crimes, except those of passion? With machines taking over jobs, crime can only increase if displaced people aren't given some kind of security for themselves and their families. Who will purchase the abundance our technology can produce as the job market continues to decline? Who will pay the politicians their fat salaries when people are out of work and government tax income dries up?

It seems clear that our social problems are not political but technological. It seems clear that technological problems cannot be solved by lawyers, bankers and merchant chiefs, the professions that generate most of our politicians.

Our present economic system needs revision. For a new idea that has been around for over 60 years, examine Technocracy's concepts on Energy Accounting. Remove profit, eliminate crime. Can it be done? It doesn't cost anything to investigate a new idea.

Violence, Violence, Violence

Pam Gill

1994

Published in:

- The Northwest Technocrat, 4th quarter 1994, No. 337

Shamefully, violence is the hallmark of contemporary times. Given we have a highly developed society, where are the roots of such primitive and destructive behavior? In their book, *Beyond Language; Social and Cultural Factors in Schooling Language Minority Students*, John U. Ogbu, University of California at Berkeley, and Maria Eugenia Matute-Bianchi, U. of C. at Santa Cruz address the subject:

"Deviant behavior is a reflection of the destructiveness of enduring subordination and relegation in a perpetual caste-like status in society. Pervasive and enduring social and economic deprivation have transformed traditional values into negative, embittered self-destructive behavioral patterns, frequently of a violent nature."

In discussing how society might change sufficiently to eliminate the violence that plagues us, they say:

"Another prerequisite is to recognize that real change depends on opening up decent youth and adult futures, not just patching up the deficiencies of individuals."

While these sentiments might be read as a call for radical and dramatic change, they are well buried inside hundreds of pages of scholarly research.

So great is violence today that it finds its way into writings that are intended to be essentially devoted to other social issues. Issues such as abortion and health care, are hotly debated, and right now reams of legislation about immigration are being battled over, and documented and undocumented immigrants are being alternately frightened, defended, and targeted. But research indicates, as the above quotes support, that society needs to be restructured to provide meaningful futures for human beings. Unless we do this, it doesn't matter enough what method we use to teach English as a Second Language, to support minorities' native languages, to validate individual cultures. All the ethnic food festivals and folk dances in the world are not going to change the poverty, abuse, illiteracy, and lack of opportunity that many of all races and sexes suffer from on our continent.

We need a healthy environment to substantially reduce violence. Many doing the research may be trying not to make serious waves because their own careers as professors and researchers provide them with a reasonable income and intellectual work. Yet many of their observations are earnest and the data convincing. The language may be esoteric at times,

but still their work shows that we need to change our system fundamentally if we aren't going to ignore and waste the lives of millions of people. Otherwise, society's loss is -- and will continue to be, huge.

The number of people living in disadvantageous conditions is frightfully large. We put ourselves at great peril if we choose a road of denial.

The hope is that we can move to a social structure proposed by Technocracy Inc. We live in a technological age, and this design is planned and laid out to be compatible with this new age. This plan for a new social structure is not dogmatic but simply a framework for how efficiently goods, services, education, entertainment, etc. could be provided, distributed and supported. Our technological age calls for this down-to-earth method; just "patching up deficiencies" isn't going to work.

This design is a method of social operation in which violence would tend towards zero. Ogbu and Bianchi must be credited for addressing the violence problem. They do not, however, propose enough of a solution. On the other hand, Technocracy does. Literature describing Technocracy can be obtained through the address listed on this publication. One can do his or her own study and check out the viability of Technocracy's conclusions.

To Your Health...

Stella Block

1989

Published in:

- Section 3 Newsletter July 1989, No. 71
- The Northwest Technocrat, 4th quarter 1989, No. 317

``Smoking May be Hazardous to Your Health" is a warning that is printed on every pack of cigarettes. This small statement was printed on boxes of cigarettes after years of crusading by a few dedicated scientists, civic leaders, citizens and physicians. A crusade was also launched against saccharin, a suspected carcinogen; cyclamates have been barred from retail store shelves. There have been other crusades against some chemical or other, some activity or other, all taken very seriously and pursued to some degree with righteousness and an aura of serving the ``public good." The press devotes a great deal of time and space to these campaigns as news items. A great deal of research goes into these activities. But the one crusade, the one campaign that deserves banner headlines in every newspaper, day after day, the one thing that is truly hazardous to *everybody's* health is never mentioned -- the **Price System**. [I am the Price System - essay.](#)

Cigarette smoking is hazardous to one's health -- if one smokes them. Cyclamates and saccharin are perhaps harmful to those who use them. But there are substances that are being inhaled, imbibed, and ingested by the public (without its knowledge) that will prove far more harmful than cigarettes or saccharin -- not only to the immediate victims but to unborn generations to come (radiation is only one example). Not even the trees, grass and animals in the world are immune from the environmental pollution that rains down on the earth from chemical substances and particulates that are spewed forth from smokestacks. Industrial wastes are dumped and buried in the ground or poured into rivers and oceans. These practices by industry are destroying the environment. Not much is done about it because it would "cost too much" to devise technology or techniques of prevention. Legislation is being devised in an attempt to control future dumping, but that which is already dumped and fouling up the environment is hardly touched.

The Price System has one inflexible rule: Does it pay (in terms of money, of course)? Every product must show a profit; every endeavor must prove its money making capabilities; otherwise it ceases to exist.

The chemical age, which was ushered in after World War II, has been proven to be the biggest bonanza of all time. The magic of chemistry was hailed as a panacea to end humankind's ills. A headline in a Cleveland, Ohio newspaper in March of 1948 reads: "Sees Chemistry's Age of Abundance End War." The prognosticator was William J. Hale, research consultant at that time for the Dow Chemical Company. He went on to say, "for the next 1,000 years, our civilization will be based on three great new industries -- plastics, alcohol and light metals, in that order..."

He went on to explain how plastics could be made from a variety of plants. "Plant life breaks down into lignum, starch, gums, vegetable oils, fats and alcohol that the chemist simply puts together in different ways. Then we come to alcohol. There you've got something. Ethyl Hydroxide is the most diverse chemical compound known to man." He warned then that gasoline is the worst fuel for automobiles. Speaking of the nonrenewable resources such as coal and hydrocarbons, he stated that he hoped "we would not continue to exploit and destroy these nonrenewable resources..." He said he hoped some would be left for the future when "man had become intelligent enough to use them properly." This highly optimistic picture of the future was never given a chance. The nonrenewable resource, petroleum, was exploited to the hilt.

In just a few short decades our dependence on oil and its byproducts is nearly complete: plastics, synthetics, detergents, spray, paints, medicines, cloth and other materials too numerous to list -- all made chemically from oil (petrochemicals). The plastic wrap (pliofilm) that we bring our groceries home in is the least of the products that is made from petroleum by-products. From the time that the "chemical age" burst open at the close of World War II until now, the waste products, the residues from the manufacture of all the plastics, synthetics, herbicides and pesticides were buried in areas that were deemed unsuitable for anything else. Haulers were contracted who disposed of the wastes as cheaply as possible. The producers of the wastes were thus freed of obligation to the community or to the public in general. They paid for the haulage as good business practice under the Price System and there ended their obligation.

Billion of dollars were spent by business to advertise their wares; the public bought, used and then threw away all those pretty plastic coverings, those "convenience" products that are supposed to make life so wonderful in this modern day and age. Do you have mosquitoes in your yard? Get a spray can of good ol' something or other and spray them away. The list is endless, generating billions of tons of waste cans, plastics, foils, bottles and other throwaway wonders -- products of the laboratories of the new "chemical age."

Out of the front door of these laboratories poured synthetic materials that rivaled the richest silks and brocades of ancient times. Synthetic materials imitated fur, velvet, satin or the sheerest gossamer fabrics of incredible tensile strength. Weed killers enabled farmers to increase the yields of their acreage ten-fold and at the same time freed them from back breaking toil. The preservation of food was merely another miracle of the laboratories.

There is no denying that chemistry has created an easier world, a victory over nature, as one scientist put it. But it could very well be a Pyrrhic victory because of the effluent that flows out the back door of these same laboratories. Unimaginable chemical combinations were disposed of in the most careless fashion (and still are). It was cheaper just to dump the residues than to apply scientific means to detoxify or render neutral the waste at the source; it can be done but it would ``cost too much." At present count, it is estimated that there exists some 50,000 waste disposal sites around the United States, seeping noxious fumes into the air or seeping deadly chemicals into the ground waters.

It took humankind centuries to climb out of ignorance and superstition that we find quaint; that diseases were caused by germs was scoffed at by the most learned men and women of ages past. It took much trial and error to arrive at what now seem simple precautions against illness. The wearing of clothing stopped many diseases that were caused by skin contact from one individual to another. It took humankind centuries to come up with medicines and procedures to cure the sick. Vaccines have been developed to the point where, it is possible; the last case of smallpox has been erased. Humankind has found solutions to many ills that had plagued them from the very beginning. The simple procedure of replacing thatched roofs with wood or tile prevented the spread of diseases by removing the breeding places of vermin -- rats, mice and other rodents -- that were carriers of disease.

But in just a few decades, humankind have foisted upon themselves a kind of plague that no amount of medical skill will cure because there is no known cure for chemical poisoning; there are no known vaccines against it. The ones who resisted the early medical doctors and scientists with their vaccination and preventive medicine were ignorant, unschooled people, still wallowing in some ancient superstition of their own. The people who developed the new chemicals and this wonderful new world of throwaway junk are brilliant men and women, well educated in their line of work. The language they speak is like no language on earth. This is a language learned in the laboratories and class rooms of our most prestigious universities. But the end result of their work will be worse than the devastation wrought by the black death of the middle ages. Down through the ages, humankind did learn to live with their microbes and their viruses. They developed a biological immunity to the microbes they had to live with because they too were organic entities. But there is not enough time to develop immunological defenses against inorganic chemicals.

This is what Celso Bianco, immunologist at the State University of New York, has to say: ``the human system can vanquish the highly complex flu virus, made of thousands of amino acids and nucleic acids. But we are susceptible to a simple chemical such as DDT, which is composed of only 14 carbons, 9 hydrogen and 5 chlorine molecules. An important difference between flu virus and DDT is that the latter was not present in our environment until recently, and consequently was not a selective pressure during the evolution of our immune system. Had we been exposed several million years ago to DDT and other recently synthesized chemicals, our cells might have developed means of breaking these substances into harmless byproducts. Industrial pollutants constitute a selective pressure that we are physiologically unprepared to handle at present. Since some of these new materials affect our genetic material, they can cause mutations. Theoretically, over time, we could expect populations capable of resisting pollutants to appear within the human species.

Unfortunately, there are inarguable objections to allowing nature to take its course. First, we do not want to deliberately bring deformed beings into the world; in any case, we have no guarantee that an immune population would indeed appear." (Reported in *Natural History Magazine*, 1979.)

We have perhaps the highest education rate, the most schools, and the best universities in the world, but we have behaved like tribes of primitives who look for signs in the skies for guidance when it comes to our collective safety and survival. Our quest for money has overshadowed our intelligence. Every action is measured against what is profitable and what is not. The producers of the industrial wastes are not alone to blame for the staggering number of waste dumps. Peter Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* (1882) is a classic depiction of the greed of city fathers itching after wealth. The locale is a resort town dependent on tourists to come to the mineral baths located there. A doctor of the town discovers that the baths are polluted. When he advised the town leaders of this fact, instead of welcoming the news and doing something about it, they labeled him ``an enemy of the people." The news of the pollution naturally would halt the tourist influx and thereby the money they would bring. A parallel can be drawn in the case of the now notorious Love Canal. The leaders of the city of Niagara permitted the dumping of the waste. They wanted the business and the money that industry would bring in. They did not investigate; the dumpers of the chemicals did not explain what went into the canal. The developers and home builders around the area either did not care or they didn't know. It was not investigated -- ``it would cost too much." Not until the situation literally blew up in their faces was something done -- but not enough. This is the situation clear across the continent. The Price System does not allow for human or environmental consideration.

Huge sums of money (\$600 to \$700 million) are being appropriated by Congress for clean-up purposes. This is not enough. We must change the entire structure of our society. Then and only then will we be able to stop the pollution at the source. Without the consideration of money, research can be done to PREVENT rather than cure, because there really is no cure. Unless we institute a system to halt the spread of the chemical poisoning, we will be inundated by our own effluent.

With the discontinuance of money, as proposed by Technocracy, will be the elimination of the practice of putting a price tags on human lives, the end of putting a price tag on whether or not the environment is worth saving or not and how much of it is to be saved. Technocracy embodies the concept of the conservation of resources, both human and otherwise.

The Weakening Link

Alma V. Mawson

1996

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 2nd quarter 1996, No. 320

The ductile strength of any link in a chain can be determined by the limit of stress it can endure without breaking.

Think of the flow of goods from production to consumption as a "chain". If, or when, a link in that chain breaks down, there is no longer the possibility of a flow between the two areas.

When so much is being produced, while at the same time there are more and more people living in poverty, then we must realize that a link in the chain is weakening and is threatening to collapse at any time.

The weakening link in the chain connecting production with consumption is: the monetary system!

Plenty for every citizen can be produced, but it cannot be distributed because these impoverished people now haven't the money that would give them access to that plenty. And that condition is brought about by the stress that technology is putting on the Price System chain. So much more can now be produced by machines, but with less man-hours of time and labour required in the process.

The ductibility of our present method of social operations has just about reached its limit! That fact is evidenced by all of the increasing monetary problems with which the politicians are juggling. However, they are doing the only thing that can be done under Price System rules: shift burdens from one area to another. Those are palliative measures. They are not solving the problems, because they are not dealing with *CAUSES*. So, politicians are going around in circles -- which is a sure indication that they are lost. They don't know how to get out of the Price System jungle in which they are entangled.

A compass is essential right now -- and Technocracy provides it! Investigate its potential. It is the only way out of the "jungle" we are in. People must get rid of these two concepts: ownership, and earning a living. They belong to the age of scarcity and human labor.

Our many failures are an indictment against the attitude taken toward, not only our own species, but also to all other of earth's life-forms.

Instead of being led by propaganda, it is time people started using their brain-power to investigate the facts that immediate changes to the social system must be made. [The American Political Price System TNAT info. The North American Technate](#)

-- Alma V. Mawson,
12348-B Technocracy Inc., Victoria, B.C.

The Art of Unlearning

Lois M. Scheel

1995

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletters, May. 1995, No. 135

One of the most essential subjects to unlearn is the importance we place on owning property beyond our needs and beyond what we can use. Where did it start, this thing called ownership? This thing that enslaves us? This thing that invites thieves? This thing that encourages loaded guns? This thing that turns friend against friend, family against family, nation against nation? This thing that fills us with fear? This thing that revs up our greed instincts? Did it begin with trade?

According to Will and Ariel Durant in their massive undertaking of eleven huge volumes of *The Story of Civilization*, they write: "Trade was the great disturber of the primitive world, for until it came, bringing money and profit in its wake, there was no property, and therefore little government."

Now we have trade, property, lots of government, and if we keep on acquiring more and more property at the expense of our natural resources, we may become the blessed inhabitants of a primitive world again, only this time a primitive world that has been ecologically degraded beyond restoration.

People hang on to their property as though it is more important than life. Some even control it from the grave through prerecorded wills and smart guardians or wily lawyers. And with property ownership comes all its attendant nuisances: taxes, zone restrictions, mortgages, upkeep, insurance, thieves, con artists, and after death -- probate for the grieving family, grieving over the loss of a loved one, or grieving over the monetary loss to yet another form of legal blackmail -- or both.

In some cases it takes almost a lifetime to acquire that important property, and a lifetime isn't very long. So what is so important about having all this property to worry about? Usually by the time we've accumulated it, we are too physically spent to enjoy it. In our struggle to become property wise, we've forgotten how to live. Parents struggle through their child-rearing days to get that large house that will accommodate the family more comfortably only to discover that by the time they fulfill their dream, their chicks are ready to fly the coop and leave them roosting in a house too big to handle.

William Randolph Hearst spent most of his life acquiring property. He collected castles, six in all, like others collect guns, and filled them with more collectibles. With the help of his

widowed mother's fortune, he collected newspaper syndicates and used the power they gave him to influence public opinion. He also used his power to manufacture news events and add spice to the written word. Then he printed these events as fact, probably changing the course of history in some instances, especially his frenzied buildup and support of the Spanish American War. When he died, he left warehouses full of his collection of possessions from all over the world, some forgotten, some never looked at again, which were eventually auctioned off. But his mania for possessing as much as possible before he left this world probably put him at the head of the class in taking more than his share of nonrenewable natural resources. And what good did these possessions do him? He turned out to be mortal after all, and the *Grim Reaper* removed him from the social scene just as it does all of us eventually.

Of course, under our existing, weak social structure, owning property is one way some people seek security. In some instances, owning property is the only security they have. If they own a house and can afford to pay taxes on it, they don't have to worry about being evicted or joining the legions of homeless people living in the streets. But just how secure are they? One long-term illness could wipe out everything they own, leaving them financially and property poor.

We use air service without owning an airplane. We can ride any public transit system at our disposal without owning the vehicle. So why do we insist on owning a car? Because under our present system, cars are necessary. We have no efficient mass transportation system installed, and so far as we know, there are no plans for installing one in the near or distant future. But suppose we had car rentals placed at strategic locations, and all we had to do was call and have the latest, most energy efficient model delivered to our door. This would eliminate the high cost of insurance. The high cost of maintenance. The high cost of taxes. And it would eliminate the highest cost of all; buying the car in the first place. All we would be expected to do is contribute to its use. Then when we reached our destination, we could call the nearest car rental and have their service personnel pick up the car. This way we wouldn't be tying up a vehicle for hours, parked on the street somewhere; until we needed it for our return trip, we wouldn't be required to contribute to its use while it wasn't in use. (Now when we rent a car, we pay plenty for its use whether or not it is in service. It can be parked at the curb for hours, days, we still pay for its use.) With an efficient car rental service, fewer cars would be needed, relieving some of the pressure on our environment. Of course in this type of transaction, the car would no longer be a status symbol to show our friends and neighbors just how far up the ladder of success we have climbed -- or how deeply in debt we are.

If cities were designed so that dwellers there could walk to the market, theater, public swimming pool, health facility, public park, and so on, could we unlearn our love affair with our car so this easy, healthful exercise would become socially acceptable? Wouldn't it be easier to walk a short distance than:

- Find our misplaced car keys.
- Climb into our car.
- Secure the kids in seat belts.
- Secure ourselves in seat belts.
- Fight traffic from the time we back out of our driveway to the time we reach our destination and then return back home again..
- Wait in line to gas up.
- Kill time while we have our car serviced.
- Call in a locksmith when we've exhausted all ways of opening our door after locking the keys inside.
- Find someone with a jump cable after we've forgotten to turn off our lights on a foggy morning.

- Be at a complete loss for transportation when the car fails to start.

Foot power takes up little room. Car power requires more and more roads, and the bigger and faster the vehicle, the more room it needs. It has been said that highway speculators gaze where cattle used to graze. Some day, perhaps, the only scenery we will be able to see from our cars while out for a drive on the not-so-open road is more cars.

And how about shorter work days, shorter work weeks and longer vacations. We could keep the factories and businesses in operation 24 hours a day with four-hour shifts. Just think: no more traffic jams; no more crowded buses, commuter trains, and recreation facilities; no more spending weekends getting ready for work on Monday by catching up on chores we didn't have time for during the previous week. All this wouldn't be so difficult to unlearn, would it? Divide up the work load? Shorter hours? Longer vacations? Give everyone qualified and old enough a job for as long as jobs last? As machines continue to eliminate jobs, we may get that work shift down to two hours a day. Full-time employment is coming to a close. If you haven't figured this out by now, you aren't very observant.

Ah, but what about sufficient income? Probably the most difficult thing to unlearn would be replacing value with measurement. After all, we can't go on wasting our nonrenewable resources forever. Since energy is the only common denominator of all goods and services, how about energy accounting! Can't picture a world without money? Money, a measure of nothing? Replace it with energy accounting that can be measured? We are fast becoming a cashless society anyway, what with technology replacing tender with bits and bytes and direct transfer.

With energy accounting, everyone could have a piece of that elusive pie whether employed full time, part time or not at all. We already have the technology and the technological experts to install such a system. This system would replace *social insecurity* with sufficient *social security* for all citizens as their birthright, getting rid of the cruel practice of basing their security on the amount of their income in a declining job market.

When will Americans reach their limit of tolerance under a system that can produce an abundance but creates shortages to keep prices up while many of its citizens go hungry? When will they realize that full-time employment is on its way out; that machines are the new slaves; that they will have to forget about the nobility of work and demand an income instead? When will they awaken to the failure of the political system? Well, it appears that many of them already have reached their limit of tolerance. Consider the violence in our streets and in our homes. It has only one way to go unless we replace a flagging political system with the intelligent use of scientific methods to solve our serious social problems.

It's true that the unwise use of our technology by politics, the military and big business brought about many of these problems. Now it will take the intelligent use of technology to solve them, but we won't find the answers in politics. From its beginning, politics has seldom solved serious social problems. In this modern age of high technology, the situation grows worse. Does a politician know how to put a dam together, or even if a dam is needed, or if it is feasible at a certain location? No. He is concerned only with getting it named after him. Besides, our overworked politicians don't have time to solve social problems. They're too busy plotting their strategy for the next election.

Like Shel Silverstein's, *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, when the author's imaginary world begins, and Dr. Seuss', *On Beyond Zebra*, where the author takes us beyond the alphabet to sharpen the imagination, why don't we reach out beyond what we have been taught to accept as gospel and investigate other avenues for living. And while we are mentally traveling these enlightening avenues, why not put our imagination to work. Be there. Live in that world we are investigating. This will help our unlearning process. Then see if we want

to continue under an unfair system that creates its own increasing crime statistics by subjecting its citizens to hunger, disease, decaying infrastructure, mindless wars, and lack of concern for those displaced by the machine age.

Customs and habits die hard. We've learned everything about our present social system except why it doesn't work. Now it is time to unlearn many of the things we have been taught by examining some facts. We could start by investigating *Technocracy's Technological Social Design* booklet. This design is a concept of the way our social system could be managed to accommodate the technological age we are caught up in.

This is not to say that this concept is the way things actually will be in the future; it was designed as a possible alternative to our present unworkable political structure. But, until someone comes up with a comparable functional social design, this is the only one in existence that covers all bases and is compatible with our advancing technology.

Perhaps we should say that ***it is what you "unlearn" after you know it all that really counts.***

Technocracy Is Best Vehicle For Our Future

Lorraine Rhode

1990

Published in:

- The Northwest Technocrat, 3rd quarter 1990, No. 320
-

Dear Editor:

Two articles in the Post Crescent, "U.S. can't afford the economic hardship of peace" (Nov. 25/89) and "Economic stability relies on sales" (Nov. 28/89) -- point to the flimsy understanding of the impact science and technology has on our lives and how we should operate our economy. We are deathly afraid of peace and think if we buy, buy, buy, we can buy prosperity, but if spending slackens there will be a depression. Where are our brains? Can't we think of a better way to operate? Money has become useless as a distributor of goods and services, and is our most serious social problem.

For the first time in history, with science and technology, we are able to produce, with fewer workers, more goods and services than there is money to buy the increased production -- enough for all North Americans. These calls for a completely different method of operation, one that will work in harmony with the environment and the resource-technological capabilities of this Continent -- or our obsolete "free enterprise" system will eliminate us. There is no freedom without economic security.

Technological production began before the Great Depression, in fact was mostly the cause of the Great Depression when over 50 years ago huge quantities of food stuffs were destroyed as people didn't have the money to buy the increased production -- no jobs, no money, no food. People went hungry, and it has continued ever since. Milk was poured into ditches and fruits and vegetables were dumped in fields and crude oil poured over them to prevent people getting any for free. Now, surpluses are stored in caves at great cost while the number of poor and homeless grows. Does this make sense?

World War II bailed the U.S. out of the Depression, and prosperity continued in the Cold War with Russia serving as the necessary "enemy" to justify the spending of billions of dollars for armaments each year. (No half-pint enemy would do.) The bottom line of the military policy of the U.S. is profits, not its deterrent value. Under the obsolete Price System we are trillions of dollars in debt which will never be paid. How big is a trillion? (One trillion seconds in time equals 32,000 years.) War is obsolete, solves nothing, just reduces population, maims people and destroys resources.

The free enterprise system is like an old jalopy that has outlived its usefulness. We change drivers at election time, hopefully expecting the old jalopy to run again, but no matter how willing and dedicated the drivers may be, they can do no more than the old vehicle is capable of doing. New drivers or a new vehicle? Technocracy is that new vehicle, modern, high-powered and extremely efficient, ready to advance civilization to a new height.

Lorraine Rhode

From The Post Crescent, Neenah, WI. December, 1989.

We Teach Them To Kill

Lois M. Scheel

1995

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletters, Dec. 1995, No. 142

In the 1930s, Spencer Tracy and Franchot Tone starred in a World War I movie titled, We Teach Them To Kill. This movie did not become a blockbuster, and certainly neither the government nor the military heartily supported it; the essence of its message was strong stuff.

Franchot Tone started out as a timid draftee with Tracy as his war buddy who tried to help him overcome his fear of guns, and killing in self defense. Even running a bayonet through a straw dummy caused Tone to turn squeamish and faint. As the war progressed, however,

he began to recognize the power his gun gave him. By the time the war ended, killing an enemy soldier didn't phase him one bit. Even as the bells tolled, announcing the end of the war, he couldn't resist picking off one more enemy soldier who had already thrown down his gun, overjoyed that the war was over.

World War I servicemen returned home to face economic hard times. Tone supported himself with his gun, robbing and killing to make an indecent living. In the end Tracy, who never enjoyed killing anyone, even enemy soldiers, shot Tone in self defense. As he looked down on his former friend's lifeless body, he said: ``We taught him to kill."

Of course this was fiction, but how many times can the reason for acts of violence be traced to a warped outlook from training for war and war itself. And nowhere are masters as adept in the training of potential killers as those who teach the young and impressionable how to prepare for war.

The one thing these fledgling warriors are not taught is that if no one profited from war, there would be no wars. In **World War II** billionaires were made while young men risked their lives on the battlefield for \$30 a month. By the time those who survived returned home, they had lost several years of their youth to war while the armchair warriors raked in the profits.

World War I, claimed by politicians to be the war to end all wars, preceded the *Great Depression*. Twenty years later **World War Two** proved that all wars hadn't ended as promised by earlier leaders, but this war pulled the economy up to heights never before known, ending the *Great Depression*. Preparation for war created new jobs, at least for as long as the war lasted, and thousands of the young workers gave up their jobs to go to war. There were so many jobs around, one could make a choice, and many women went to work for the first time.

After the success of **World War II** in building up the economy, hey...why not have perpetual war! We were blessed with the Korean War, and Vietnam, and the long, cold war with Russia. Government-induced propaganda against Russia and other countries became so instilled in the American people that many of them haven't recovered from it yet. Few complained about the unprovoked military assault on Grenada: the CIA-assisted mining of a Nicaraguan harbor; unilateral support of so-called ``contra" terrorists directed by old Somoza types; extensive and caring assistance to Marcos and Duvalier, both well-known criminals in their own countries; the bombing of Libya, which killed Muammar Qaddafi's infant daughter; CIA assistance in the assassination of the duly elected leader of Chile; The Gulf War; disagreement with every arms control proposal of any kind; two-trillion dollars spent on armaments in six years with no war in sight.

That was yesterday, but things haven't changed much today. Recent reports say that the pentagon will be issued more operating funds than it requests. Already the military is planning ways to spend this extra booty. How about a giant blimp, a 1,485-foot craft that could get tanks to hot spots in a hurry as reported by the *Jane's Defense Weekly*: ``Using a fleet of airships, each with a potential 50 ton lifting capacity, the Joint Chiefs of Staff would be able to guarantee a fully capable military response to any future act of aggression in days, rather than weeks." Of course when the military gets a new toy, it usually finds an excuse to use it. But that's not all. ``Star Wars" may get a booster shot. And how about the \$493 million B-2 bomber! How many more of these do we need? Undoubtedly there are more military schemes on the back burner. And our government talks about balancing the budget in seven years?

How many American citizens have heard of *The School of the Americas*? The U.S. Army School located in Fort Benning, Georgia? This school is sometimes known by other names,

especially in Latin America: School of the Dictators, School of the Assassins, and School of the Coup. Although it is located only a short distance from CNN headquarters in Atlanta, it has had little TV coverage; even though it qualifies for everything the media goes for: terror, shooting, killing... This school, located on American soil, has trained the likes of Guatemalan Col. Julio Alpirez, a CIA operative who was implicated in two murder crimes recently; this school has trained Salvadoran mass murderer Roberto D'Aubuisson; this school has trained many others of equal notoriety, including General Manuel Antonio Noriega, whom we first trained and later turned against. If any other country maintained a school that promotes terrorism--kidnappers, torturers and assassins--we would condemn it.

And now, as stated in the October, 1995 issue of *National Geographic*: ``The U.S. Army is sneaking up on the next century at Fort Benning, Georgia, as it tests `smart gear' now being developed for combat. ...Wired in, their weapon sights and helmet-mounted video cameras capture images for transmission. Ultimately, a network will link similarly outfitted infantry to tanks, helicopters, and command posts, allowing rapid assessment of the battle, more effective troop movement, and more accurate artillery targeting."

While the U.S. Congress plots to cut benefits for the poor, our government keeps the School of the Americas open with millions of taxpayer dollars yearly.

And now how easy it is to learn to make a bomb. Check out the internet for instructions, or books in the local library, or certain magazines. Nothing to it. Some amateurs blow themselves up first but others, like the bombers of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City and the New York Trade Center, or car bombers, or bombers by mail, graduate to carry out successful devastation. Lately there have been reports of pipe bombs being placed in rural mail boxes.

We teach them to kill in other ways besides preparing for war and making bombs: it's okay to kill wildlife in the name of sportsmanship; it's okay to move into wildlife habitats and then kill that wildlife because it might eat us or it becomes a nuisance; it's okay to move into the forest for privacy and then kill the trees because they provide too much shade, or they shed their foliage on our roof, or they feed our fireplace, or we can get big bucks for them; it's okay to wipe out brush and trees that hold riverbanks together so we can have a view; it's okay to clear-cut the forests in the name of ``forest management" (the Forest Service's euphemism for profit) and in the process bring about erosion, loss of top soil, rivers filled with silt and debris, and dried-up streams where salmon used to spawn; it's okay to contaminate the oceans with refuse and oil spills; it's okay to over-fish the ocean and then blame sea lions for the shortage of seafood--so let's cut down on the population of the sea lions--, and now shark meat is considered a table delicacy, the ocean's natural predator that helps keep the sea lion population in balance; it's okay to drain wetlands to use for purposes other than for what nature intended, endangering the bird population that frequents them; it's okay to overgraze the land and kill off native grasses. This is what we teach our children instead of stressing the importance of ecological balance and preservation of our natural resources. This is how we teach them to inadvertently kill the future for their grandchildren.

Because of easy access to guns, killing for a living has become such an every day occurrence, we've come to accept it. Instead of getting to the source of the problem, we try to solve it by barricading our houses; by demanding more police on the beat; by building more jails to incarcerate the already deprived. Until we close the tremendous gap between the rich and the poor, crime will always be with us. The late columnist, Sydney J. Harris, once wrote: ``*The kind of prisons a society has, and the kind of persons it takes in and turns out, reveal more about the essence of that society than any other of its institutions. We make and get the criminals we deserve.*"

The growing tolerance of killing takes hold in other frightening ways. In America, often referred to as an armed camp, the citizens arm themselves against intruders and street muggers. Some states pass laws that allow people to obtain permits to carry concealed handguns. Some states try to make these laws mandatory. Many of these "right to bear arms" defenders of life and liberty do not realize that they would have to have their gun in hand at all times to be ready for an assault. (*Now just wait a minute Mr. Burglar--just hold off until I get my gun. Let's see. Where did I put it? But little children can find it.*) Even police officers know that being armed doesn't always protect them if the assailant gets the jump on them, and the police go through extensive training in learning how to defend against serious and life threatening aggression.

Children are killing children and children are killing their parents and children are killing their teachers with the guns their parents keep around for protection. These children must have learned that it is okay to kill from somewhere. Many are too young to realize the consequences of their actions; the actors they see killed in movies and TV shows always come back to life.

Thou shalt not kill, the most profound of the Ten Commandments, is too often ignored by even most of the professed religious in our midst. The U.S. militias sprouting up around the country to protect themselves from real or imagined government abuses pack both guns and Bibles. This is the contradictory, violent atmosphere their children grow up in. They learn to hate and kill at an early age.

A report of new lessons in killing appeared in an article in Newsweek, October 30, 1995 edition. "Women hunters take to the wilderness, guns cocked and bows nocked." These new hunters are "retrofitting their rifles to accommodate their shorter arms", and many come "equipped with drop-seat pants to accommodate nature's call." Some female hunters consider the hunt "a reverence for nature and spend hours with their dead prey thinking about why it was there, where it lived, what it was doing--a spiritual thing..."

Federal Cartridge Company deals out free bullets to these new hunters in a plot to keep them hooked.

The Browning Corporation, which makes 12 kinds of sporting shotguns, began selling lighter versions designed specifically for smaller arms and hands.

State wildlife departments, which get the bulk of their revenues from hunting and fishing licenses, see these new hunters as a "way to refill their coffers."

Wilderness workshops designed to accommodate women hunters are run by state fish and game departments with help from ammo makers. Of course these new hunters are supported by The National Rifle Association with free gifts.

And these new hunters are teaching their daughters how to "match wits with nature." (In all fairness why not throw down the gun and "match instincts" with nature and see who wins.)

One 14-year-old girl said that hunting was better than selling Girl Scout Cookies. A 13-year-old, who couldn't wait to shoot her first duck and mount it at the foot of her bed, saw no harm in killing ducks "because there were so many of them."

One female hunter compared butchering domestic animals for food with killing wildlife for food. No difference. Ignored was the fact that our wildlife helps to steady nature's intricate balance.

Another female hunter said she enjoyed eating meat more when she could shoot it herself.

Instead of cutting down on the population of wildlife, the proliferation of the human species should be curbed as it is the fastest growing and most dangerous predator of all.

Something to Beef About ...the cow, the pig and the planet...

Lois M. Scheel

1992

Published in:

- Northwest Technocrat Newsletter, Jul/Aug 1992, No. 106
-

Making ends MEAT--A global concern among experts

Are members of the bovine family, namely cows, inheriting more of the earth than they should in order to give us food?

There was a time when pork took top place on the meat agenda. Not only can we enjoy roasts, chops, steaks, soup and stew from this versatile animal, but its meat can be smoked to make ham and bacon; pickled pig's feet and head cheese were considered delicacies; lard, the fat of the hog, was at one time an important edible fat; its intestines make excellent sausage casings; its bristles are still used to make long-lasting paint brushes; pigskin, when tanned, makes beautiful leather accessories, including the American football; one of its major achievements is the use of its skin in providing a substitute skin for burn patients instead of the painful procedure of using the patient's own skin in the healing process; and the latest achievement is processing the pig's ears into hard chew gristle for dogs. Most of us have heard the expression regarding pigs: ``Everything is used but the squeal."`

The omnivorous pig also makes an excellent garbage disposal for vegetable and animal debris. Added to all these benefits of the American swine is its ability to reproduce more rapidly and mature earlier than any of the other common meat-producing animals.

The pig lost first place as a meat producing animal during the winning of the American West. Pigs just couldn't handle "pig" drives. When discovery was made of the resilience of the cattle over long, arduous journeys across country, cattle ranchers' taste buds changed accordingly. The push was on to convince others that beef is where it's at. And that push still thrives today. After all, the profit derived from raising and selling beef determines its use, even if it isn't all that good for our health or the health of the environment.

Perhaps more damage was done to the environment during the cattle drives of the last century than at any other time. An Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-sponsored study describes this history of shame: "The land was grazed so ruthlessly that native perennial grasses were virtually eliminated from vast areas and replaced by sagebrush, rabbit brush, mesquite, and juniper. The exposed soil was quickly stripped from the land by wind and water--unchecked flood flows eroded unprotected stream banks--subsequently lowering water tables. Perennial streams became intermittent or dry during most of the year."

By the late 1870's, travelers on their way across the plains could see dust clouds miles away caused by cattle drives from Texas to railheads at Dodge City and Kansas City. The plains were torn up; buffalo were annihilated; and the already disappearing Indian tribes were starved and herded onto reservations to make way for cattle.

Harold Dregne, professor of soil science at Texas Tech University, estimates that 10 percent of the arid west has been turned into desert by livestock. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which is responsible along with the U.S. Forest Service for overseeing public rangeland, reported last year that nearly 70 percent of its expansive holdings in the west were in unacceptable condition.

And now, every nation that can afford to sharpen its taste buds for meat, just as the United States has been doing for years. Imagine five billion people eating the way most Americans do! There would not be enough land to grow the grain to feed the animals, not just the cattle, but pork, turkey and chicken also.

In 1971 Frances Moore Lappe's book, *Diet for a small Planet* made the best seller list and boasted a million copies sold. She did an excellent job of chronicling the ratio of pounds of grain fed to cattle in relation to subsequent pounds of meat fed to people. Her recipes are nutritious and would certainly cut down on the waste of grain used to produce beef for human consumption. But how do you get everyone to follow these recipes? And even if you could, nutritional food preparations expensive unless you grow your own garden. Even beans, the staple people could afford during the great depression, are a premium on today's market.

Mrs. Lappe made some interesting observations in her studies on our shrinking planet:

Due primarily to genetic seed improvements and the widespread use of both fertilizer and pesticides, the productivity of American farm land increased 50 percent between 1950 and 1971. But the American economic environment was not ready to receive the "good news" delivered by the breakthrough in the exploitation of our natural environment. Given the sharp inequalities in wealth here and abroad, it was impossible to sell profitably all of our newly enlarged food resources. Thus the challenge confronting American agriculture soon became one of disposal, of how to get rid of it all. By far the easiest way to get rid of the problem of having "too much" was just not to grow the food at all. Farmers were paid 3.6 billion dollars to hold land out of production, but even so, crops reached record highs. An agricultural scientist at Purdue University had received a state grant to figure out some way to use up all that food in a nonfood manner. He was not successful, but the perfect solution was found elsewhere. The American steer.

An average steer was able to reduce 16 pounds of grain and soy to one pound of meat. (The statistics remain the same today.) The other 15 pounds were inaccessible for human consumption. They were either used by the animal to produce energy or to make some part of its own body that cannot be eaten, such as hair.

Livestock other than the steer are considerably more efficient (see chart): hogs consume six, turkeys four, and chickens three pounds of grain and soy to produce one pound of meat. Milk production by cows is much more efficient. In fact, less than one pound of grain is fed for every pint of milk produced.

An acre of cereals can produce five times more protein than an acre devoted to meat production; legumes (beans, peas, lentils) can produce ten times more; and leafy vegetables fifteen times more with some plantain each category producing even more--spinach, for example, producing up to 26 times more.

Imagine yourself sitting in a restaurant in front of an eight- ounce steak and then imagine the room filled with 45 to 50 people with empty bowls in front of them. For the ``feed cost'' of your steak (1971 prices), each of their bowls could be filled with a full cup of cooked cereal grains...

Now, 21 years later, the above situation remains unchanged except to grow more intense as population increases and more nations turn to meat consumption for protein. Writing for World Watch, Alan B. Durning, senior researcher at World-watch Institute, studies the same situation as France Moor Lappe did earlier, only he emphasizes the effect our meat-centered diet has on the air and groundwater (May-June, 1991 issue, Fat Of The Land). Mr. Durning makes some interesting observations also:

When most Americans sit down to dinner, they're only a bite away from unwittingly worsening the environment. The overlooked offender lurking on their plates--between the potato and the vegetables--is tonight's steak, pork chop, or chicken breast. The unpaid ecological price of that meat is so hefty that Americans, if they aren't careful, could end up eating themselves out of planetary house or home.

Animal farms use mountains of grain. Nearly 40 percent of the world's total, and more than 70 percent of U.S. production, is fed to livestock, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture data. Last year, 162 million tons of grain, mostly corn but also sorghum, barley, oats, and wheat, were consumed by livestock. Millions of tons of protein-rich soybean meal rounded out the diet. No other country in the world can afford to feed so much grain to animals.

Worldwide, 630 million people are hungry today--because they're too poor to buy food, not because food is in short supply. Even if feed grains were given as food aid, hunger might persist because handouts can flood agricultural markets and discourage Third World farmers from planting crops.

American feed takes a lot of energy to grow--counting fuel for farm machinery and for making fertilizers and pesticides. David Pimentel, a specialist in agricultural energy use, estimates that 14,000 kilocalories are required to produce a pound of pork in the United States--equivalent to the energy in nearly half a gallon of gasoline.

Jim Oltjen, professor of animal science at the University of California, Davis, estimates that half of the grain and hay fed to American livestock grows on irrigated land. He calculates that it takes about 430 gallons of water to produce a pound of pork, 390 gallons for a pound

of beef, and 375 gallons per pound of chicken. Thus the water used to supply Americans with meat comes to about 190 gallons per person per day, or twice what typical Americans use at home for all purposes.

The livestock industry uses half the territory of the continental United States for feed crops, pasture, and range. On the half of U.S. cropland growing animal feed and hay, soil continues eroding at a frightful pace despite recent progress in conservation. For each pound of red meat, poultry, eggs, and milk, farm fields lose about *five pounds of prime dirt*.

In Central America, beef exports to the United States have played a part in the tragedy of forest destruction. Costa Rica, for example, was once almost completely cloaked in tropical forest, holding within its small confines perhaps 5 percent of all plant and animal species on earth. By 1983, after two decades of explosive growth in the cattle industry, just 17 percent of the original forest remained. Throughout the period, Costa Rica was exporting between one-third and two-thirds of its beef, mostly to the United States, and it continues to export smaller quantities today.

Producing a single Costa Rican hamburger involves the destruction of 55 square feet of rain forest--an area about the size of a small kitchen. In clearing that single patch of wet lowland, the Costa Rican forest would also release as much as 165 pounds of the carbon it naturally stores into the atmosphere in the form of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, according to Sandra Brown, professor of forestry at the University of Illinois. That's as much carbon as the typical American car releases in a 20-day period...

Frances Moore Lappe found the answer to solving these problems in changing our diet as a first step to taking responsibility for the future. She suggested taking the profit out of life itself--food. She further suggested a list of organizations to join to participate in people-to-people development projects. She also listed magazines to read and films to watch. Mind you, this was 21 years ago, and the problem grows more severe.

Alan B. Durning puts his faith in people and nations to do the right thing. ``Personal decisions to eat foods lower on the food chain won't suffice without corresponding changes in governmental codes that allow the livestock industry to deplete and pollute resources without bearing the costs. What's needed is enough citizens demanding that lawmakers take aim at the ecological side-effects of meat production. If the global food system is not to destroy its ecological base, the onus will be on rich nations to shift from consumption of resource-intensive food stuffs toward modest fare."

Both Lappe and Durning recognize our technological capability to produce enough food for all people. Lappe talked about abundance and how it was impossible to sell it all; she told how farmers were paid not to grow. Durning talks about the millions of people going hungry, not because food is in short supply, but because they are too poor to buy it. Both try to solve the problem of abundance with the same system that spawns inequities in the food chain. The elimination of money and the installation of a system of measurement would solve the problem of abundance. If we don't begin conserving our natural resources, abundance will decline to sufficient and gradually work its way on down to insufficient.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS:

Letters-to-the-editor of World Watch magazine varied following Alan Durning's article. One writer complained because Durning hadn't shown concern over the suffering of the animals on factory farms. (That is another horror story.)

A Texas writer, perhaps a cattle rancher, took Durning to task and labeled his approach to sustainable animal husbandry extreme and unreasonable, pointing out the advantages of beef in providing protein in our diet. He also pointed out the progress being made in soil erosion control and a preferred solution of making local food production possible rather than giving food away and increasing dependency. (In New York City, for instance, the poor could plant a garden in their window boxes, if they could afford the seed.)

Many beef cattle ranchers, like loggers in the Northwest, have never known anything else. This is how they make their living. Naturally they will defend over-grazing cattle for food, just as loggers defend clear-cutting the forests, regardless of damage to the health of the environment and the subsequent damage to **our** health.

Technocracy leads the way with its solution for eliminating the terrible waste of natural resources. The least common denominator of all goods and services is energy. Technocracy offers an Energy Accounting design that would not only measure production and consumption in accordance with human needs, creating a balance in distribution (see enclosed Information Brief), but it would also eliminate the need for money, which is a measure of nothing.

Despair Blamed On Social System

Stella Block

1990

Published in:

- The Northwest Technocrat, 3rd quarter 1990, No. 320
-

The Letter to Ann Landers from a 23-year-old college graduate which appeared in the Thursday edition of the Times-Gazette was the most scathing indictment of our politico-economic system that has appeared anywhere.

The statement, "We just don't know where to start," reveals the frustration and despair that is felt by the youth of today. Our present social system does not give youth a sense of direction that the exuberance and enthusiasm of youth demands. The young man cited numerous world-wide problems that are growing and he knows that his generation will have these problems dumped in their lap. That is the political way -- postpone any solutions until it becomes somebody else's problem. Unfortunately, we are fast approaching the time when postponements will not do any more.

His letter should be read by every officeholder in the country -- starting with the president on down to the lowliest "dogcatcher."

One statement he makes, "There are enough weapons to blow up the world we live in 40 times!" should be underlined in red! Still we build more and more armaments and help arm other countries that are in conflict with their neighbors.

What kind of world is this for our youth to look forward to? If they are not drafted to fight in the Army, then their livelihood is curtailed by the need to pay for all this useless armament.

Not only that, but the destruction and waste of irreplaceable resources that are thrown away on the arms buildup will impoverish their children if they live long enough to have any.

There are other signs and symptoms of youth's frustration and their lack of direction and that is the growing unrest in the large cities: gangs; gang warfare; and racial unrest. All elements of a very serious explosion are just waiting to happen.

Unless a complete restructuring of our social system, as outlined in *Technocracy Inc.*, is forthcoming soon, our youth will be sacrificed needlessly on the altar of greed and complacency of an obsolete social system. [The Technate, Humanism, & the Cultural Arts.](#)

Side Effects

Lois M. Scheel

1996

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletter, June 1996, No. 148

Supporters of the "right to bear arms" believe that they have been granted a guarantee by the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution to own guns in order to defend themselves from those who would threaten their security. The tragic side effect of this kind of self defense is that private gun owners shoot more innocent people than criminals, whether by accident or intent. In spite of irrefutable evidence of this phenomenon, gun sales increase, crime rates multiply, prison cells runneth over, and gun entrepreneurs smile all the way to the bank, supported by the National Rifle Association and its cohorts in government.

A headline in *The Portland Oregonian* reads: "**OREGON PRISON INDUSTRY BOOMING.**" As of March 29, 1996, the actual number of prison inmates in Oregon reached 8,182. Here's a look at Oregon's prison inmate forecast:

- January 1998: 9,316
- January 2000: 12,478
- January 2002: 16,070

- January 2005: 19,228

One Oregon citizen was appalled at the reference to prisons as a growth industry for the state. In a letter to the editor he wrote: "...The goal should not be figuring out how to house 10,000 more inmates. The goal should be how to keep these 10,000 people from going to jail..."

Anthony Lewis, N.Y. Times News Service, writes: "Pete Wilson's three strikes and you're out is making California the world capital of incarceration. California used to spend six times as much on higher education as on prisons. Now the prison budget is larger. Prison guards have a powerful union and now earn more than public school teachers. A guard at San Quentin has the same annual salary as an assistant professor at the University of California: \$45,000."

Even if the prison business is booming, it can boom only so far. Who will pay the taxes to support this extra growth? Not the prisoners or the unemployed.

By now almost everyone realizes that machines eliminate jobs. At last, the new slaves are taking over and we should rejoice, but our government in its antiquity makes little allowance in its budget for massive unemployment. Many displaced workers will try to survive any way they can, even if it means breaking the law, and often they wind up in prison. Instead of structuring the prison system to prepare these unfortunates for a kinder, gentler life once they get back on the outside, our prisons turn them into hopeless, classless human beings who quite often must commit more crime to survive once back in the unemployment jungle. Besides, by the time today's newly incarcerated have served their sentences, jobs will be more obsolete than before as our unstoppable technology marches on.

Why, when we aren't threatened by war, do we keep such a gigantic military establishment. Can you imagine the unemployment that would result, the thousands more people roaming around looking for jobs, if we cut back our military forces and its attendant office personnel, including those stashed around the world! The companies responsible for manufacturing military materiel from uniforms to body bags, plus military hardware, would shrink from lack of sales, and more unemployment would ensue; but our dwindling natural resources could stand a break from mindless exploitation.

And if we prepared for peace instead of war, what would we do with all the military hardware we've accumulated? Dump it in the ocean? (We've done that before.) Recycle it? Sell it? After all, arms sales are big business for the Pentagon. The U.S. has been the world's top arms dealer for years. Cutting out our unnecessary military expenditures, from weapons to bloated pensions to housing for military personnel, would be the biggest case of downsizing in history. And the above-listed side effects of military downsizing skim only the surface.

In the civilian sector, the CEOs in charge of the companies that are downsizing are getting fat pay raises. Compared with all those laid off, their body count amounts to nothing more than a small splash, but they have oceans of income. However, they can spend that income on only so much produce; after all, there must be a limit to what they can consume. So who will buy the rest of it? The part that isn't destroyed to keep prices up? Not the downsized workers.

In the past, tobacco companies had such a powerful lobby, they kept the political arena in tow. They exerted so much influence on the people, many started smoking just to be in vogue. Check out old movies. Almost all the stars smoked—at least in the movies. In a February, 1947 issue of *Cosmopolitan*, a cigarette ad reads: "More doctors smoke Camels

than any other brand." And, "Your 'T-Zone' will tell you...T for taste...T for throat...that's your proving ground for any cigarette. See if Camels don't suit your 'T-Zone' to a 'T'" And the accompanying picture shows a handsome doctor on foot, bracing himself against a winter snowstorm, medical bag in hand, making a house call on Christmas Eve. House call? On Christmas Eve? What a sense of humor, although a recent newspaper article claimed that competition is so stiff now, some doctors are making house calls again to stay in business.

We now know the terrible side effects of long-term smoking, but what about the side effects of not smoking! Now that people are cutting down or cutting it out altogether, how can the government survive without those cigarette taxes? And will our politicians have to forgo PAC money from tobacco conglomerates? Sad. And what about those whose jobs depend on the tobacco industry. The cigarette magnates will find a way to survive: push cigarette smoking on third-world countries; raise the price of cigarettes at home; continue with their clever ads, such as "Be Happy, go Lucky." (The writer who thought that slogan up for Lucky Strike cigarettes years ago was paid several thousands of dollars for four words.) But will these kings of all drug pushers go to prison for their folly? Not likely. The poor souls caught with a few grams of cocaine will. What about the tobacco farmers! A recent article in the *Associated Press* tells how a "test crop" could protect tobacco farmers' livelihood. What kind of a test crop? "A genetically engineered variety designed to produce a malaria vaccine and another drug." Stay tuned in for the next exciting episode.

A shortage of jobs is not new. In the November 12, 1929 issue of the *Portland Telegram*, a small item appeared on the front page: "There are many war veterans in Portland without employment. An appeal was made today by C.A. Townsend, president of the Veterans' Saber club, for jobs; any kind of work that presents itself. It is asked that those who can furnish employment call Broadway 3525."

Many World War One veterans came home to find their jobs gone and machines taking over. In fact it was during this time that a group of scientists and engineers noticed how quickly the government could produce machines to do the work in preparation for war. They then conducted a lengthy survey to determine how this advancing technology would affect the future job market and other social trends. This survey eventually developed into the organization known as Technocracy Inc., whose early predictions of a jobless society are being vindicated by the march of events. And still our leaders, over 60 years later, in the face of more machines and a larger population, cry out for jobs for everyone, welfare recipients and single mothers included, this at a time when corporations are laying off thousands and thousands of people permanently, or moving their operations out of the country.

Now here is the latest on what politics refers to as a "sacred cow." (You guessed it. Social Security.) This program has been one of the most successful plans to emanate from the United States Government, if not *the* most successful. It has been so successful that its financial stronghold is the envy of politics whose members borrow from it frequently, leaving questionable IOUs. "Pay you later." Sure they will. As William Raspberry, columnist for the *Washington Post Writers Group* notes: "The huge baby boom cohorts pay more in Social Security taxes than current retirees take out; the system is running a surplus, theoretically. Instead of investing this surplus wisely, it is used along with general revenues for current government expenses. The trust fund will one day get an IOU that eventually must be redeemed by the taxpayers."

Senator F. Hollings says, "In plain language, they can't use the Social Security trust fund to cut the deficit, and yet they keep doing it. It's illegal; government knows it; they shrug their

shoulders and call it a 'unified budget', as though that changes something. The truth is they're afraid to repeal the law, and they're afraid to obey it."

If our legislators did succeed in dismantling Social Security, as they bravely hint at when it isn't election time, where would enough general revenue to carry on current government expenses come from? Higher taxes? As more and more people are being permanently laid off? And those senior citizens who couldn't make it without their earned Social Security income—back to the poor farms? Or home with the kids? Those seniors generate a big turnover in the economic sector with their Social Security checks.

For almost every political solution to social problems, a serious side effect cancels its effectiveness. And every political solution becomes a control of people, which doesn't work as is evidenced by the size of our prison population. We need a government that is managed in the scientific method with a control of things, not people. With an intelligent control of things, there would be no need to control people. And we need a government that works around the clock and doesn't spend half its time preparing for the next election. How can any government operate efficiently when its members are working full time for their own benefit: off giving lectures, making wild promises they know are impossible to keep; slandering their opponents; participating in tabloid scandals to hurt the opposition; and always planning ahead, sometimes deviously, to winning the next election. Where is there time for meaningful accomplishment?

But that's the way it's been since the beginning of politics, and until the complete collapse of the money system takes place, politics will reign supreme. As President Woodrow Wilson said: "If you want to make enemies, try to change something."

See North America -- Before It's Too Late

Helen Spitler

1947

Published in:

- Great Lakes Technocrat, May/Jun 1947, No. 85
 - Technocracy Digest, 3rd quarter 1996, No. 321
-

What Is It To You?

“No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; everyman is a peece of the Continent, a part of the Maine, if a clod be washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a Promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy Friends or of Thine Owne were; any mans Death diminishes Me, because I am involved in Mankinde; and therefore never send to know for whom the Bell tolls; it tolls for thee.” (John Donne (1573-1613) English poet and preacher.)

Am I My Country's Keeper?

Have you ever seen a pine forest after it had been swept by fire, with its bare, charred trunks standing black against the sky? Have you ever seen an abandoned coal mine, topped by a ghost town that once flourished with life, activity, warmth? Have you ever seen a wheat field on the prairie after wind and hail had flattened it into a twisted mess; or a field of potatoes that had been dug up and left to freeze and rot on the ground?

There is no joy in these sights. But, there is something else. What is it to you? Put yourself in the position of a Doctor who has a patient with a strange new malady. Connecting bands of tissue are drawn tight, shutting off circulation at many points in the patient's body. In the hand a metal coin is clasped so tightly that the fingers are turning blue, and useless. Suppose that medical history records no similar case. There is no precedent to follow in treatment. A scientific, workable plan is presented but the Doctor cannot adopt it. What stands in his way? Lack of consent and cooperation by the patient's guardian.

There is no joy in a sight like this either. But, there is something else. What is it to you?

You are the guardian of North America. It, too, is sick unto death. Improper circulation is at fault. The flow lines of goods, through production and distribution, must be opened. Irreplaceable natural resources are wasting away, dangerously. Technocracy offers a solution. Will you, the guardian of this land, give your consent to open these vital flow lines?

What is to you? It's what it is to your country. Only a matter of security or insecurity; special privileges or equal opportunity; abundance or scarcity; civilization or fascism; life or death; Science or Chaos. That's all!

Passive consent is worthless. Active assistance is imperative. Join Technocracy, the only organization with a scientific, workable design for the functional operation of the North American Continent.

-- Helen Spitler
Technocracy member
At Johnson's Landing, B. C.

Urban and Rural Schools Face the same Problems

Pam Gill

1997

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 1st quarter 1997, No. 323

Compulsory education in the United States arose to fit the requirements of the industrial age. The demands of this age differed from those of the primitive, agrarian age that existed at the birth of our nation.

Bells in past ages were used by churches to call the community together. In industrial-age schools, they are rung to simulate the factory floor. In the pioneering schools built to accommodate the new age, classes began and ended at precise times. Gone is looking at the sun to get an idea of the time of day. The teacher's watchful dispersion of tardies takes the place of the company punch clock. Students have been warned a few million times ``If you do `that' on the job, your pay will be docked and you might well lose your job." So, in the classroom you are learning behavior patterns for employment.

The employment situation now being as baffling as it is, these admonitions are confusing, to say the least. What employment? What jobs? Ask the millions who must rely on government hand-outs for all their sustenance.

Once, class schedules were arranged so that, in summer, young people could help with the farm chores. This was a requirement in the past primitive agrarian age. Ironically, we are still honoring this calendar in most school districts, although the number of students contributing to the harvest is infinitesimal. The number of students detasseling corn is nil; technology has taken over and most of the work involved is totally automatic.

Putting schools on a year-round schedule is far too little and far too late. Requirements of modern times mandate that we stop living in the past. It is interesting -- and disheartening -- to think how long it has taken for human beings to look objectively at our situation and say, ``Oh, I guess we don't need to do this anymore."

Urban schools face tough times; problems abound. But urbans are not alone; in many places, rural schools face identical problems. Drug use is pervasive. *The Boston Globe*, in their June 24, 1996 article, ``In Deep South, Crack Has Gone Country" reported how the drug problem is national in scope and stated:

``The pushers are on the streets, the crack houses, the school yards, the church yard. They're anywhere they can make a dollar."

``Crack has gone country. The quick hit drug that has been the scourge of the nation's cities is now pervasive in the rural areas of the Deep South, where bored and jobless young people have turned to crack for excitement."

More complications: as more new teachers gravitate to cities, jobs go begging in many rural schools. ``The depth of this problem was reported in the *Washington post*," July 6, 1996 article ``Schools in Rural Areas Face Tough Task of Keeping Teachers." To quote the article:

``The predicament is unfolding in rural and small-town public schools across the nation: More than ever, they are struggling to recruit teachers to replace retiring veterans, or to persuade others from leaving for growing and better-paying suburban schools."

Be that as it may -- and the situation is serious -- but it is not all fun and games for teachers. In the San Francisco School District -- like many others -- teachers compete for scarce positions. In some school districts -- certainly including San Francisco's -- the ground is shifting quickly, and unpredictably, for teachers and students. In the business community, management has raised havoc with people's jobs with their downsizing and out sizing. School administrations are raising havoc with teachers in general, with their reconstitution, magnet academies, restructuring. Some administrators refer to their job reduction as ``the reinvention of education."

The problems with our schools are manifold. Teachers are probably the only bright spot in our messy situation. They spend hours preparing for individual classes. Teachers are known for buying supplies for their classes. Many a student has eaten a meal bought by a teacher.

The rewards for teachers practically don't exist. They have to contend with students who come to class with little or no desire to learn. They have to contend with a small percent of the class who are disruptive. It is not unusual for 25 percent of the time to be taken up disciplining these students. But that doesn't make the rest of the time class learning time. After disruptions of this nature, it takes time to get the rest of the students back in the mode to learn.

There is more! Overcrowding, truancy, poor skills, poor medical care, violence, drugs, lack of motivation, depression, racism, child abuse, poverty.

Violence? *The Associated Press* titles a June 12, 1996 article ``Grisly Data On Killings At Schools." In it they state:

``More than 50 killings or suicides occur each year at or near U.S. schools, according to the first systematic study of violent school-related deaths.

``Most deaths are in urban areas, involve handguns and teenagers, and are the result of `interpersonal conflicts,' according to the study by the national center for Disease Control and Prevention that examined deaths from July 1, 1992, through June 30, 1994. Almost a third of the deaths were gang-related.

``We think of schools as safe havens, 170 said James Mercy, director of the CDC's Division of Violence Prevention. ``These deaths fly in the face of that sentiment.""

The truancy problem is huge. In July of this year, President Clinton allocated \$20 million to combat this problem. The first part of July of this year, the *San Francisco Chronicle* devoted a large segment of one paper to this subject. Truancy officers complain that they pick up a

student, return the student to school, and next day they find the same student not at school. They are frustrated and don't have an answer.

Teachers are ambivalent on the truancy problem. The truancy students are often the trouble-makers in class. A teacher wants to teach. A teacher has spent hours preparing a class program. A teacher wants students who want to learn; that makes the hours of class preparation worthwhile. A teacher is torn between wanting truancy students and not wanting them. In today's society, there is no easy answer.

I hear this from a teacher: As a teacher it makes me tired to have to itemize the problems, and I think most people who aren't teachers could itemize the problems about as well as I. It is true that, as a teacher, I have a clearer idea than a non-teacher of what it means to teach Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* to a class in which half the students cannot and/or will not read a short chapter on their own and comprehend what it is saying ... a class in which a third of the students are absent a day a week, and a fourth of them, twice a week, and three of them wander in a couple of times a month. Then there are students moving, dropping in and out of classes. ("Kids, Schools, Suffer from Revolving Door," *American Educator*, spring '96, p.36-39). The number of classroom disruptions would shock and unnerve non-teachers, just as it does teachers.

For a solution, we don't need to reinvent education. We know from research and experience tons of strategies that work. But we insist on over-working and under-supporting teachers (not just financially, but, also, practically; teachers don't have thorough and appropriate help.)

For a solution, we need to institute a new system. We need a whole new day and age. We need a day and age that fits into our scientific, modern, technological lifestyle. Our socio-economic structure, our "Price System," is totally out of sync with modern times. Certainly school problems are a strong indication of that point. A whole new system? Politics and politicians don't fit into such a system. Look anywhere you want and you will not find a whole new system. That is to say, you won't find one unless you investigate Technocracy's concepts.

Technocracy's Technological Social Design is a whole new system. When in place, humankind will reach a pinnacle: for the first time in human history, society will have a social structure worth the dignity of the human species.

When we arrive at this day, teachers can look back in horror at our schools and their schedules. We will see these days as something akin to the nineteenth century practice of sending kids down coal mines and into textile factories. We'll say, "How could we have been so barbaric!"

Running Around in Circles

Bette Hiebert, Editor, The Technocracy Digest

1997

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 2nd quarter 1997, No. 324
-
-

People certainly are! It's because they don't know which way to turn! The present social system is in such a mess; jobs being downsized, people out of work and thus, no money with which to buy even necessities; man-made disasters, crime, pollution, stress; no good times in sight. People are swayed this way and that by media information and miss-information; they don't know whom to believe. But, there is a way to assess the truth; a means by which you can find out what is actually happening now, and what is bound to happen because of the bungling of both financiers and politicians.

To assess the truth, you use the scientific method. You use science just the same as you do when you want a machine to work, or you are building something you want to last.

That is how the research and educational organization, Technocracy, came into being. It had its inception in 1919 in New York City in an organization known as the Technical Alliance of North America, formed by seventeen competent, educated people.

They were: Frederick L. Ackerman, Architect, Allen Carpenter, M.D., Carl L. Alsberg, Biochemist; Louis K. Comstock, Electrical Engineer, Stuart Chase, CPA, Alice Barrows Fernandez, Educator, Bassett Jones, Mathematical Technologist, Sullivan W. Jones, Architect, Robert D. Kohn, Architect, Benton Mackay, Forester-Naturalist, Leland Olds, Statistician, Howard Scott, Engineering Scientist-Technologist, Charles Proteus Steinmetz, Electrical Engineer, Richard C. Tolman, Physical Chemist, John C. Vaughn, Surgeon, Thorstein Veblen, Educator and Author, Charles H. Whitaker, Architect. They chose Howard Scott to be their chairman; he later became Director-in-Chief of Technocracy.

The primary aim of the Technical Alliance was to ascertain the possibility of applying the achievements of science to social and industrial affairs. With this in mind, they undertook a survey of the energy and natural resources of the North American Continental Area. In addition, they studied the industrial evolution that had taken place therein. They showed graphically the operating characteristics of the present industrial system with all its waste and leakage, and worked out a tentative design of a completely coordinated system of production and distribution. They kept in mind always, of course, their aim, which was to provide a better standard of living in the continental area with the least possible waste of non-renewable resources.

These seventeen people did research, in their own special fields, for 14 years, and concluded that machines would eventually be able to take over many of the tasks then performed, thus releasing people from drudgery and allowing them to have more freedom and leisure time to take up pleasant pursuits that would broaden their minds, entertain them, and make life here on earth a wonderful place for them. And isn't that what it's all about? Isn't that what is supposed to happen? Enjoy this beautiful world around us?

Instead of that, politicians and financiers have hoisted the Price System flag and everyone is supposed to salute it. Different methods have been devised for a few at the top to enjoy the fruits of the labors of the 95 percent at the bottom. The lower layers are left to scurry around, most of them forced into unsatisfying jobs, scratching and scraping for money. When the produce of the machines in the crammed warehouses started spilling over, as it was now a glut, or because the majority couldn't afford to buy it, wars were pulled out of the hat so the produce could be sold and used up, resulting in more money getting into the hands of the already rich, regardless of the blood being spilled by the many who fought because they were told they must be loyal to the Price System flag (OOPS!) country. These wars -- I and II, Korean, Viet Nam, and Gulf -- have all been pulled off for the same reasons.

Even though most people now have jaded views of politicians and the whole social and financial process of no jobs, no money, they still are running around in circles, trying to find ways out of the maze. They still do not want to start thinking for themselves -- why they are struggling to keep alive in a system which is catering to a few.

We urge all of you in that category to just sit down a moment and think. Even the media carries articles that could make you aware of why you are in a poverty-stricken situation. In another article in this magazine, is a list of some of these disasters chronicled in the media - calamities that need never have happened. And, if you want to know *why* they happened, then keep reading our articles.

And, if you want to know *how* you can have that happy, leisure time we mentioned above, Technocracy does have the solution. Over 60 years ago, the Technocracy, Technological Social Design was offered to the citizens of this Continent. It still is.

We urge you, for your own sakes, and for the sakes of your children, to start looking at things from a scientific viewpoint, and you can then come to the conclusion that the only thing that can work to solve social problems caused by the present financial system is that Scientific Design. We hope you will, because then the work of the Technocrats will be done, our research and education finally heeded, and we, too, can enjoy that leisure time.

America's Scandalous Prison Record

Lois M. Scheel

1996

This article is commentary to the article Lock `em Up and Throw Away the Key by Clarence Darrow

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletters, May. 1996, No. 147

It's been almost 100 years since Clarence Darrow gave this speech, and in all that time we haven't learned what he knew all along: Locking people up doesn't work. 1.5 million Americans now live behind bars.

Statistics prove that by locking people up we make more criminals, meaner criminals, smarter criminals. In prison these outcasts learn from each other; the more experienced teach crime smarts to the beginners. And just surviving in prison against rape, murder, beatings, drugs, solitary confinement and prolonged chances for parole makes many of these castaways more hardened and bitter when they get out than when they came in.

When Chief Justice Warren Burger, who died last year, tried to get legislation passed where prisoners could work within the prisons, earning some money and acquiring experience at a useful trade to help them cope on the outside once they were freed, labor unions saw prison industry as competition for their members. Prison educational programs are frowned on by college students on the outside who must foot the bill for their own education. So, is creating dangerous monsters a better alternative?

Darrow considered the monopoly of natural resources a bigger crime than anything the prisoners had done. In his day it was coal, but why should only a few own the land, the oil, the minerals, the forests, and the river banks any more than they should own the air we breathe. And they would confiscate that if they could.

Technocracy has pointed out for over 60 years that eliminating the money system and replacing it with energy accounting, where no one would own the natural resources but would still have the use of them, would eliminate most crime practically overnight.

At one time we had the best telephone system in the world. We didn't own our phones; we paid for the use of them. Now deregulation has taken us a step backward; we still pay for their use, but we must buy our own phones and also pay the cost of repairs.

At a time when technological advancement replaces jobs, we had better put our minds to work: People need basic items to survive; if they don't have them, they will get them by whatever means it takes. As Darrow said, most of the people locked up in our prisons do not belong there. Give them a share of the natural resources, which belong to everyone as a birthright, and we would have a lot of empty prisons.

The Power of Custom

Lois M. Scheel

1995

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletters, Oct. 1995, No. 140

Custom, a habitual course of action, is possibly one of the most intricate links in the thought chain that impedes the human being's ability to change. Even when the evidence for needed change strikes them where it hurts most, people can't imagine a way of life other than the one they've always known.

Because all citizens are not allowed their fair share of their country's natural resources, even as their birthright in the land of their birth, we have poverty in the midst of plenty, and this has been the custom for eons. The Native Americans saw the importance of sharing the land and its resources, but they were called savages. What could be more savage than allowing people to go hungry in a supermarket full of food? Or forcing them to sleep in the streets in the midst of empty, unused buildings. Before the arrival of the white people on this continent, Native Americans gave their people a measure of security from birth to death. Today we have the technological means to provide security for all North Americans, but instead we cling to the European custom brought over here by our ancestors of ``earning our bread by the sweat of our brow'', or we don't get any bread.

Now there is this jobless thing that has been going on for a lot longer than most people realize. Downsizing is quite a popular sport with corporations lately. Almost every day the news media talks about some company giving employees permanent layoffs. Yet politicians make nonsensical promises, such as *finding jobs for everyone*. They know there aren't enough jobs out there. The people know it, but here we run into custom again. For centuries people worked. Many of them worked independently on farms or as the village blacksmith, or fishing, sailing -- on some kind of a job anyway. Others, who didn't own land, worked in the fields for those who did own land. But almost everyone worked. Naturally, those who held the power over those who worked were the most vociferous in touting the virtue of work. A person felt guilty if he wasn't working at something because he was made to feel guilty, and this custom hasn't changed today. Even though jobs are becoming a thing of the past; even though machines can do the work faster and better -- instead of our government providing security for displaced workers, they are made to feel guilty if they don't have a job, as though machine-induced unemployment is their fault, and without these jobs, many must give up their custom of eating regularly. Politicians continue to beat the work ethic drum, especially when it comes to those ``welfare deadbeats'', single mothers in particular. But if a single mother does work, such as Marcia Clark, prosecution attorney in the O.J. Simpson trial, she is accused of neglecting her children. So here we have our politicians contradicting themselves. Does this surprise anyone? Hardly; it seems to be an accepted custom that undoubtedly has been with us ever since the advent of politics.

And speaking of politicians -- aren't they, who for the most part are lawyers and businessmen, an anachronism in an age of technological intelligence? In a complex situation, shouldn't we have people leading our country who are appointed for their qualifications? Instead the custom is to encourage an unenlightened populace to vote for their choice of leaders based on their charisma, impossible to keep promises, and whether they are a democrat or a republican. In every presidential election year, an independent party threatens to bring about change. If an independent party did succeed in getting elected, the only noticeable change would be new faces, new titles, but still the same old politics.

Large families were popular in the past so the children could help on the farm or with other family projects, or take care of their parents in their ``golden" years. Since mortality rates in children ran high, the more offspring produced, the better the parents' chances of some surviving to grow up to carry on family customs: extend the family farm; take over their father's practice in medicine, or sailing, or logging.... Now machines have practically obliterated the small farmer along with other small business entrepreneurs who are becoming as endangered a species as the northern spotted owl. Big farm operations and other large corporations are resorting to technology to get the work done. Yet some people are producing large families anyway. Some, who already have children of their own, even take fertility drugs. What are we going to do with all these people when jobs become even more scarce and our natural resources, which most people take for granted, run out? The pro-life people may not realize it, but they are working toward the elimination of all life forms from overpopulation and the toll it takes on these resources.

We've always needed money to survive, and to have money we've needed jobs. Jobs are on the way out and so is purchasing power and some of us have been so accustomed to both. This breeds a volatile situation. The violent revolution already under way on the streets of large cities and spreading to smaller communities as well is anything but a quiet one, and it will get noisier and noisier. One wonders how anyone could be so naive as to not see that a shortage of jobs, which results in a shortage of purchasing power, plus created food shortages in a land of plenty can't help but build a climate of crime. How many of us would watch our family members starve rather than disobey the law if that were the only way to survive?

Many people don't realize that we are headed toward a cashless society anyway: checking accounts, direct deposit, credit cards, and now to expedite financial matters, a check-guarantee card that allows any business to withdraw the amount of your bill directly from your bank account.

Saves the time and cost of writing a check. Doesn't this easy access to **credit** (or ``debt") make you wonder what the money system is all about? (Shouldn't we have some kind of measurement instead?) And these new cashless methods sort of upset old customs regarding money; some people still prefer having that cash in hand; they want to feel it, fondle it, and worship it.

Now where does custom fit in concerning our health? In the earlier part of this century, few people patronized doctors and hospitals unless they were dragged in feet first. Home remedies were good enough, and who is to say they weren't better in many ways. Some people were so poor they didn't even have chickens or eggs or other farm produce with which to pay their medical bills, but they still got help if they needed it. Can you imagine a physician today accepting such payment? Why, with what the medical profession charges, a physician could buy the family farm for the price of one serious illness. And probably the only doctor in recent history who still made house calls, and up to age 87 and perhaps a little beyond, was Dr. Louis J. Camuti, a cat veterinarian in New York who wrote a book in

1980 called, *All My Patients Are Under The Bed*. He devoted as much time to the pets' owners as he did to the pets. Just think what doctors are missing by not making house calls: coffee and homemade apple pie, and on special occasions a lifting of the spirits from that cherished bottle, and closeness with the patient and the patient's family. Ah, that was the custom. Today media health-scare tactics have turned us into a nation of hypochondriacs and doctor-induced pill poppers.

The desire to hang onto custom is on the march in other ways. People are leaving crowded areas in search of the once customary quiet life many of them have only read about. The people who are accustomed to a quieter life are losing it to this march of escaping habitat changers. ``There goes the neighborhood'' is a phrase that has taken on new meaning. California is being inundated by people from South America. Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana are being invaded by Californians, who in their effort to escape various problems back home are merely helping to create these same problems somewhere else. If we erased border lines and worked together, sharing resources, who knows! Perhaps, for instance, those South Americans would rather stay home if they just had a piece of the action. They don't seek out the United States because they love the climate here. They are searching for a better life. Who can blame them?

And what about border lines, state, county, and even national! Why do we continue to honor these antiquated demarcations? Rivers, forests and meadows don't recognize them. State and county lines were drawn up to accommodate the equestrian and foot-power era due to destinations that took hours, even days to reach, distances that no longer pose a problem since the advent of modern transportation. By eliminating these customary borders, we could also eliminate hundreds of unnecessary governments within governments. (Oh, oh, more unemployment.) And since all of nature is connected, we could -- and should -- work together ecologically as one continent.

Those who dream of going back to basics cling to obsolete customs and a lost past. Our latest, modern Luddite, the Unabomber, is determined to go back to basics and take everyone connected with the advancement of technology with him, even if he has to blow them up (with modern technology) to accomplish his ends. The power of custom too often obfuscates clear thinking.

A Vanishing Species -- And We're Talking About People!

Pamela Gill

1996

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 2nd quarter 1996, No. 320

In the late '60s my father lost his position as a well-paid business executive. A conglomerate bought out the company he helped run and did not want the old guard around. They paid him well to "retire" although they dragged out the process for months during which he found himself writing reports that went unread, getting mixed messages, and generally being made to feel extraneous and unwanted. This is after years of dedicated service; even our family vacations involved stopping at this dealer's, meeting that business acquaintance's family, seeing a new store or supplier. He had worked incredibly long and hard.

I remember my mother seeking our solicitations: "It is very difficult for a man in his fifties who has been well-paid to get another job. Nobody wants to hire such a person to be just an accountant. Nobody would expect him to function well in a position which commands little power. This is really rough for him."

At that same time I had just graduated from college and was looking for work myself. My own prospects as a woman answering "women's want ads" were horrifyingly bad. It would have been nice if we (my father and I) could have commiserated. But he had been brought up in a culture which dictated that he never flinch, master of all he surveyed. I, on the other hand, had been brought up in an environment that discriminated against women. I must admit I was feeling more sorry for myself than I did for my father.

So we stoically went forward. He failed to find work and opened a small business which prospered for a while but left him dusting shelves. I found periodic employment at abysmal jobs; after several years and twice that many jobs; I returned to school to get more good grades and then return to the same lousy job market; although, by that time, the courts had declared gender-specific want ads to be unconstitutional. By then my father, age 57, had severe brain damage and was institutionalized. At this point, I felt more sorry for him than I did for myself.

These generically unhappy stories have been repeated a few million times in the United States. Talents wasted. Experience insulted and abandoned. I am sure none of the stories are simple....maybe my father could have tried something else; maybe I could have trained to be a physical therapist instead of an English major. Who knows? But one factor that has remained constant is: there were not (and are not) enough jobs to go around. And wouldn't it be something if there were enough decent jobs to go around?

The situation of relegating older employees to the scrap heap has escalated since my father lost his job. Companies are cutting costs in salaries and benefits. Management is increasingly expendable. "Experience", contrary to being valued, is often a threat. More than we like to think, companies want employees who are reliable but uncreative, doing anonymous jobs. Because business is largely run for short term profit, the voices of experience that might criticize companies, have long-standing relationships with other workers, or elucidate serious problems, are best silenced.

Dyed hair, self-esteem, and positive thinking do not change the unemployment statistics. They may stand as testimony that you will knock yourself out harder, longer, faster than the other guy; and you may end up doing just that if you get the job over so many others.

There are still fewer elderly women than men in the work force. It has been implied that women have been filling some of the jobs denied men. I am sure that is true as women make less money, expect less advantages, and have few, if any, alternatives. It has also been alleged ``Women are more used to handling life transitions." Is this because they have so many more unpleasant life transitions?

Another small bone that sticks from many articles is the contention that young workers produce more than older workers. If hype, brawn, or hustle are major factors in that production, yes, young workers probably can produce faster. But so much of what older workers have to offer is undervalued, to our detriment.

Things are rough, as my mother said. I contend they are rough for men and women, old and young. As long as we are tied to the ``Price System" and its artificial scarcity, there are not going to be enough jobs and many of the jobs will be undesirable.

Technocracy developed a plan sixty years ago that bears close study. Its study showed that as time passed, we would reach such a point of disarray that we would have to introduce an entirely different social structure. We are close to that point.

The Design will not be reviewed here, but as for jobs, a few words will suffice. Probably in the Design, even the word ``jobs" will disappear from usage. All will find their own niche in giving service to society through choosing the unit (sequence) in which to give this service. Since no reward in the form of a ``pay check" or other financial remuneration will be forthcoming, the concept of working takes on an entirely different meaning.

Maybe even the word ``work" will disappear from usage. Indeed, the Design Technocracy proposes, if initiated, brings a whole new meaning to life.

We have the knowledge and resources to structure society in a much different way, giving respect to life, and distributing the responsibilities and rewards sanely.

Technocracy's Design is worth investigating.

A Teacher In The Trenches

Pamela Gill

1997

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 4th quarter 1997, No. 326

There was an article in the San Francisco Chronicle, May 26, 1997, by Jonathan Marshall, entitled Beyond the Bruises; The Cost of School Violence, who reported that a study finds higher dropout rates and pay for teachers.

Marshall reported that ``In a 1994 Gallup survey, Americans listed school violence as their No. 1 educational concern. And so they should, suggests a new study of the hidden economic costs of disorder in our nation's high schools.

By disrupting learning and discouraging some students even from attending class, violence increases dropout rates, and sharply decreases the likelihood of students going on to college, reports Jeff Grogger, an economist at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

In addition, hazardous working conditions prompt teachers to demand higher pay, increasing the burden on taxpayers or draining funds from other educational purposes.

The most recent surveys suggest school violence is a widespread and growing problem across America.....

A climate of fear and intimidation can hardly support learning. If students are distracted from their studies, or stay home to avoid becoming victims, it stands to reason they will do more poorly in school.....

Grogger used careful statistical tools to distinguish the effects of school violence from other school or social problems that may hinder student success. For example, he didn't want to blame school violence for high dropout rates if neighborhood poverty was really to blame for both.....

He also found that teachers commanded battle-pay premiums as the price of working at disorderly schools. Teacher salaries were 7 percent higher at schools with serious violence problems, compared to salaries at the least violent schools, again accounting for other factors.

Grogger's bottom line: Curbing school violence could have a much more profound effect on student performance than reducing class sizes or hiring teachers with graduate credentials."

School violence is a subject of concern, especially for people who have to be inside those schools. As a high school teacher, I personally feel like becoming violent, off and on, in response to the stressful conditions. So far, I've staved off the urge to get "physical" with an insolent or threatening student. Violence is very foreign to me, as I was raised in a pretty benign environment. Still, working in a high school, I've become inured to a certain level of violence, and so have the students and faculty around me....sometimes more and sometimes less than I have. I have met, and heard stories of, teachers who left a particular school, or who left teaching altogether because of an incident, an atmosphere, an injury. I know three male teachers, well into their 60s, who were all hurt risking their physical safety to prevent a group of students from further assaulting each other. As a rule, students get in fights with each other; it is hard for a responsible adult not to get involved even if it is injudicious to do so.

Rather than itemize the variety of things I've witnessed, let one example suffice. Two windows in my classroom were shot out while I was teaching my first period class. I called security, and the students crawled around on the floor looking for evidence. Besides being an outrage, it was interesting to watch both students' and teachers' responses to this unsolved attack. The next day, I inquired of a student, whose mother also works at our school, what her mother had said about the episode. The student said she hadn't mentioned it to her mother. Was she afraid to frighten her mother? Did she truly feel it wasn't newsworthy? Don't they speak? I insisted a school counselor come to the class to help process the experience. It was many days later, and the counselor was almost an hour late. The kids had little to say.

Several teachers, to whom I personally related the incident, swore I had never told them when I raised the topic at a teachers' meeting (if I hadn't brought it up, it wouldn't have been common knowledge.) Did those couple of teachers forget the information because it wasn't really processed in the first place? Was I in a total muddle and hadn't told them? Do we hear lots of `stories' inside a school which we don't have the emotional energy and the literal time to remember? I know, myself, I hear bits and pieces of stories and then I am rushing on to the next difficult task and the information is something of a swill. This facilitates the denial which is part and parcel of working in a sometimes violent environment.

Jeff Grogger's research indicates that these schools where violence is a problem must pay their teachers higher salaries to keep them there. Probably this is true; however, my experience is that teachers in more affluent school districts face less violence and are paid better. I suspect this varies, but the point that struck me while reading his article is that he is definitely thinking in "price system" solutions. In fact, he is assuming we should try to keep teacher's pay down to save money for some other purpose. My response is also a "price system" response, "I am already underpaid! How can he suggest wanting to pay less!?" This could put us into the thick of a pointless argument -- one about how there is not enough to go around, and whether I should get more by proving myself somehow more worthy, or more endangered, or more highly qualified. Let's not waste our energy!

At the end of the article, Grogger specifically weighs how money could be best allocated. He suggests we use it to curb school violence rather "than reducing class size or hiring teachers with graduate credentials." (Let us never forget, though, that animal studies show a very direct connection between crowding and violence).

Why can't we do ALL these things? What is more important than education? In this profit-driven society, plenty of things are more important than education, except for the education of a few, well-to- do well-connected students. What a shame!

Still, I want to give Mr. Grogger credit for pointing a finger, drawing a red circle around "violence in our schools." It is there. Look at it. Schools struggle to keep down the numbers of suspensions for violent infractions, because it looks bad (You might get reconstituted!). Besides, we reassure ourselves, suspending students doesn't solve the problem. No, it doesn't. But being in a fog and arguing over resources doesn't solve the problem, either.

Finally, Grogger has spent much time and energy trying to separate the causes of school failure. Jonathan Marshall writes that Grogger, "used careful statistical tools to distinguish the effects of school violence from other school or social problems that may hinder student success." Is it violence? Poverty? "Other social problems?" I suspect you can't tease too many of those causes apart, as they are so interrelated. And even if we could neatly subdivide and analyze each cause, we are still left with the gross situation: Many students are failing to get a decent education. Jails are waiting. Dead-end jobs are waiting. Welfare

isn't waiting quite as much as it was last year. Violence plays its part, and will so, increasingly.

The organization of our society itself is at fault. We need to dissipate the fog and get on with the work of reorganizing our society. Technocracy offers its social design as a starting place.

A Technological Social System

Celeste and Howard Smith

1991

Published in:

- The Northwest Technocrat, 2nd quarter 1991, No. 323

For the welfare of this Continent, there had better be a greatly expanded distribution of the facts, and a clearly identified means to bring about an orderly transition from the Price System to Technocracy.

Individuals become Technocrats because they understand that if problems before this Continent are to be solved, they will have to do something about it themselves. The type of individual who is able to be a Technocrat doesn't quit thinking about things because the Price System leadership is lousy. This only serves to irritate them to take action. They are willing to fight for this civilization because they think that it is worth saving.

The tendency of the human being is to keep trying to do things the way they were done in the past, despite the increasing difficulty that may be encountered. North America, for that reason, has clung to the Price System when it should have been "scrapped" long ago. North Americans are waiting for something to happen. One quite often hears the remark from individuals interested in Technocracy: "When the time comes, I'll be there to support you." This is "bandwagon" behavior, and shows no understanding of the role of Technocracy Inc. When the time comes for large scale action, the framework for the social movement for Technocracy had better be already built. You don't prepare for an emergency after you get into it: you either prepare for it beforehand or take the consequences.

An investigation of Technocracy's blueprint will show that in all respects it has employed the scientific method in each specific problem as well as for the entire operation. No other organization has done this in the past, and no other is doing so now. Technocracy stands alone in preparing this Continent and its people for the social change being thrust upon them by science and technology. Whether or not Technocracy ever comes into existence, the same problem of conflict between physical abundance and a scarcity economy would be facing North Americans.

Technocrats have no more to gain from implementation of Technocracy than any other North American. If some are placed in positions of functional responsibility it will be because they, like their fellow leadership personnel, have demonstrated the necessary competence. They are promoting the blueprint not for their own gain but because the nature of the developing social crisis demands such a solution.

For several decades Technocracy Inc. has made the Technological Social Design available to government and the public for an examination of the facts that show what must be done to avoid social chaos.

Technocracy's Continental Headquarters is staffed by Technocrats who will provide information to anyone concerned enough to request it. The objective is to inform enough people with those facts arrived at through the research that has been confirmed by the physical events of more than sixty years. If the majority of citizens and government continue to ignore those facts, they do so at the peril of possible human extinction.

Technocracy does not ask for soap box oratory or aimless activism, only an honest examination of the factual material available. It is apparent that most people think they are immune from the results of social decay. But as the breakdown of the Price System proceeds, no one will remain unaffected, and those who think that money will save them from the horrors of chaos, in a system dependent upon the installed technology, have an awakening coming in the not too distant future with which they may not be able to cope.

Clinging To The Best Of All Possible Worlds

Lois M. Scheel

1989

Published in:

- Section 3 Newsletter, March 1989, No. 67

During one episode in Voltaire's comedy classic, *Candide*, his main character came upon a strange land called Eldorado where gold meant nothing to its inhabitants, prisons were unknown, and a palace of science filled with mathematical and scientific instruments replaced "royal" ballyhoo and idol worshiping. No lawyers or courts of law threatened the populace as there was no need for them. Because the citizens of Eldorado enjoyed a decent standard of living, they readily adapted to their environment. But Candide believed that if he returned to the best of all possible worlds, he could buy his way back to his lost lady love with the gold and diamonds that lay in abundance in Eldorado and were his for the taking. In a land where citizens shared the resources, there was no use for such trinkets. The good king of Eldorado didn't try to detain Candide but bid his scientists and engineers to build him something for transportation that fitted his needs in order to overcome treacherous mountain passes. Once Candide returned to the best of all possible worlds where everything happens for a good reason, his gold and diamonds lured the most unsavory characters who robbed him at every turn.

By the time Candide found his beloved Cunegonde, she had aged beyond belief from trying to cope in an anti-social environment, and he found himself considerably less prosperous. Yet they married and lived out their lives in this best of all possible worlds, ignoring the security offered them in the land of Eldorado. Things aren't much different today.

Voltaire exposed the hypocrisy of his times over 200 years ago. If he foresaw the importance of government by science before the technological revolution, why is it taking the citizens living in the midst of this revolution so long to wake up? They are surrounded by technology that enhances their lives every day of the year from preserving food to bringing instant services in travel, communication and entertainment. They take these marvels for granted, ignoring the fact that today's social problems, by force of circumstances, must one day yield to scientific solutions just as food preservation, travel, communication and entertainment problems were solved and improved upon through the use of scientific study and implementation.

Citizens will go into a trance of ecstasy when listening to a presidential contender making promises he knows he can't keep; his constituency should recognize this deceit if they have any sense of history. But the more the politician bleats out what his sheep want to hear, the better are his chances of keeping his lucrative job. And his sheep want to believe that everything that happens, good or bad, is not only inevitable in this best of all possible worlds but necessary--this in the face of irrefutable scientific evidence to the contrary--so they go on, naively planning for the past while enjoying today's technological advancements.

Until the last few decades, social customs more or less directed citizens' lives from birth to death according to gender. Baby girls wore pink. Baby boys wore blue. Girls were made of sugar and spice and everything nice. Boys were made of snakes and snails and puppy dog tails. Little girls emulated their mothers while little boys were expected to walk in their father's footsteps. Primers pictured little girls impeccably dressed in frills and button shoes, playing with dolls and dishes and cookware in preparation for their adult life. Little boys were pictured with smudged faces and hands, playing ball, down on their knees shooting marbles, or helping dad with strictly male chores, also in preparation for their adult life. Early primers gave credence to the "everything nice" and "snakes and snails and puppy dog tails" jingle.

Providing for the family fell to the man. Caring for the household became the woman's lot, and if she wasn't respectably married by her 20th birthday, considers her an old maid. The euphemism of bachelor attached to unmarried men gave them a certain distinction. Biological juices turned on at the sound of "eligible bachelor." Never for "eligible old maid." Such was custom deeply instilled in past generations.

Then along came the biggest fund raiser of all times that changed our lives: World War II. Not only did sweet prosperity come to many people who had never tasted it before, but also it was the beginning of women's lib. They were needed in factories to boost the war effort. For many it was a first out-of-home job. They earned as much as \$30 a week while our gallant young warriors, the cream of the crop, fought and risked life and limb for \$30 a month. (And those who provided the war got rich.) Few of these participants knew what the war was all about. Fill them full of patriotic propaganda, and they'll follow you anywhere. Besides, the new breed of workers rejoiced at the prospect of earning all that money.

Studs Terkel, in his oral history of World War II, called it **The Good War**. (Technocracy calls it capitalizing on calamity.) Prosperity reigned for some. While we sold arms and munitions to Germany and scrap metal to Japan, some of it came back to us in the bodies of our dead

and wounded. Funeral establishments and coffin makers thrived. And there actually are human byproducts of that unconscionable period in time who long for the "Good War" again.

After World War II, women stayed in the work force. They traded their frills for designer jeans. But prosperity is once again disappearing around the corner. It often takes both mom and pop working in order to survive. Now we have single parent households, unmarried men and women sharing the same household, babies out of wedlock and marriage seem to be going out of style, customs is damned. "Old maids" have come into their own--the single woman.

Jonathan Swift in his delightful spoof on the times, **Gulliver's Travels**, pointed out that thousands of people would rather suffer death than dishonor the edict put out by the emperor of Lilliput on breaking the smaller end of the eggs first; this edict came about after the emperor cut his finger once while breaking the egg on the larger end first. But is this fictional tale so far fetched? Only a few years back peace talks couldn't get started because the participants had trouble reaching a decision on the proper shape of the conference table: Should it be round, oblong, rectangular, L- shaped, U-shaped...decisions, decisions. And today important political decisions are still being discussed--and occasionally made.

Should the banana slug be made the official state mollusk in California? In Florida the House voted to make key lime pie the official state pie. The Massachusetts House has passed and sent to the Senate a measure naming the tabby cat the official cat of the commonwealth. Let's hope the various legislatures act on these vital issues.

Meanwhile, back in the real world...financial insecurity and joblessness spawn family fights, child and spouse abuse, divorce and sometimes homicide.

An unbalanced work load causes frustration on our crowded freeways, occasionally resulting in shooting sprees. Some of the best hours of our lives are wasted, sitting in traffic jams.

We still have no coordinated Continent-wide transportation system (including transport by waterway, rail, air, roadway and pipeline), and even the magnetic levitated train, invented by American scientists in the 60s, is being built in both Japan and Germany while America procrastinates. Why? Could it be because of pressure from powerful oil and motor vehicle companies that sabotaged electronic trolley busses years ago so they could get their polluting, energy guzzling vehicles rolling?

Disregarding the danger to our diminishing resources, we continue to condone planned obsolescence. Some of our scientists are prostituted to discovering new methods of obsolescence to keep our best of all possible worlds afloat. Even the simple pencil thrives on planned obsolescence. How many times have you sharpened a pencil to a desired point, then settled down to write only to have a large chunk of lead fall out at the first touch to you paper? By the time you resharpen the pencil, a sizable portion of it disappears. And light bulbs...now we can purchase long-lasting ones--for a high price. The first light bulbs were long lasting. Easy on resources but not good for business. Then we have our sabotaged tires, razor blades, nylons, electrical equipment...Technocracy calls it petty larceny on a grand scale.

Educational systems have become political, financial institutions that make it difficult for many of our youth to receive a higher education. And if they do have that diploma in hand, what are their prospects for coping in a technological age? Most of them don't receive intelligent counseling; they are given too many unnecessary subjects, conveniently called "a rounded education" in which they are required to learn a little in each one.

This naturally detracts from their main goal. Textbooks are updated more often than is necessary to keep the money rolling in with no concern for wasted resources, and their cost is prohibitive. And speaking of textbooks was this "rounded education" curriculum dreamed up in order to sell more of them? And the one important subject seldom taught is the impact of technology on social trends.

Most of the teachers aren't qualified to teach such a subject. Many of our college educated citizens, some with families, are now living on the streets. Many of our youth feel there is no future for them, resulting in increased crime, suicides and drug abuse.

We can't feed our hungry yet excess food is stored or destroyed to keep prices up. We can't provide shelter for our homeless yet rentals stand idle for lack of tenants with enough money to pay the high price of a roof overhead. Technology replaces jobs but creates a surplus of goods and services that machines haven't been programmed to buy. Our largest welfare recipients are the United States military, politicians, and business and farm subsidies, yet we crack down on the poor who are jobless or underpaid through no fault of their own. Clearly our distribution system is not effective. And now we are being threatened with a breakout of peace on all fronts. How will we handle the resultant unemployed? The list of social problems goes on and on.

The technological equipment necessary to enhance our lives further and insure us a decent standard of living is already installed. The technicians needed to operate this equipment are available. In fact, they are keeping us alive today in spite of the interference of politics and money.

Without this interference we could solve both our environmental and distribution problems.

Technocracy's Technological Social Design has been ready for installation for almost 60 years, but most people won't take the time to investigate it. They prefer clinging to the best of all possible worlds instead of opting for an Eldorado of our times-- the North American Technate.

Over 200 years have gone by since Voltaire envisioned a government by science. Today the technological impact on our social system is much more severe, and Homo sapiens are the most corrosive animal of all. We don't have another 200 years for political blustering and indecision. We must soon learn to govern ourselves intelligently, using our advanced technology for construction instead of destruction, or our youth may prove to be correct: There won't be a future for them.

Book Review: Ecotopia (by Ernest Callenbach)

Lois M. Scheel

1989

Published in:

- Section 3 Newsletter, Nov. 1989, No. 75

As is invariably the case with most writers who attempt to solve our serious social problems with either fiction or nonfiction, Callenbach can't exorcise money, politics and voting from his mind, so his mythical social scheme would be destined for failure if taken seriously. But not in fictional Ecotopia.

Three states secede from the nation of United States: Washington, Oregon and California. They adopt one name, Ecotopia, derived, one assumes, from ecology and utopia. In the beginning their separation brought cries of treason, and U.S. helicopters mercilessly attacked them, but due to Ecotopia's ingenious technology and raw courage, this small nation wins the helicopter war. **The Mouse That Roared!** Only unlike this fictional screenplay of a small, financially destitute country off the coast of France that attacked the United States with bows and arrows, reasoning that it would lose the war against such a powerful nation and then be rehabilitated by the victor, Ecotopia miraculously rehabilitates itself. A generation later this island unto itself remains self-sufficient, having nothing to do with its neighbor, the United States, although it does associate with certain foreign countries--on its terms.

It is interesting to note that the author chose his Ecotopia where water flows in abundance; climatic temperature ranges are not too severe; sufficient resources provide citizens with a good life, although they are strictly monitored; forests thrive, especially in Oregon and Washington; some of the best farmlands can be found in all three states; and Ecotopia enjoys easy access to major waterways. Now suppose the author had chosen Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska for his Ecotopia. It would have been a different story but most interesting to see how these three centrally aligned states survived after seceding from the nation of United States.

Mandated into law are reforestation programs and protection of existing timber; like India's sacred cows, trees are entitled to protection and respect. Just to show you how sacred these trees are, the citizens of Ecotopia prefer most structures to be built of wood. A few unusual "recyclable" plastic houses dot the landscape, but wood dominates the scene. Even some bicycles sport wooden stands, a mark of distinction.

Commendably, Ecotopians recycle everything, even their clothes (no synthetic fabrics here). In fact, wearing home-made garments is encouraged; who exactly will inherit this time-consuming chore from days of yore remains a mystery. At least it wasn't mentioned in the story.

"How good it is to see stars, even in the cities," says the protagonist, William Weston, an investigative journalist for the Times-Post in New York City, who was sent to Ecotopia on an assignment, the first outside reporter to be allowed into this unusual sanctuary since it gained its independence. And what is the reason for all this pure air? There are no fossil-fueled cars, just electronic vehicles. Since the great helicopter battle, no planes fly over Ecotopia. Walking and bicycling are encouraged. Water transportation consists of excursion boats from here to there and back again. Some trucks are in operation to haul furniture and various other heavy items. But fossil-fueled vehicles other than these trucks are forbidden.

If the author, who shows genuine concern over a deteriorating environment, had considered this serious problem on a continental scale, as all thinking North Americans should, he would realize that you can't secede three states from the rest of the nation--or continent--and expect to halt environmental degradation. The scale is too small. Pollution spreads across the continent, and eventually the world, with no respect for boundaries; its contagion touches all life support systems. The Columbia River, which flows between Oregon and Washington State, its vast mouth opening into the Pacific Ocean, its source in another nation to the north fed by other bodies of water, does not honor borders just because earlier primitive modes of travel instigated marking off existing county and state lines on a map. Our present era of immediate communication and high-speed transportation makes these boundary lines obsolete. And in Ecotopia, voting areas have been cordoned off into even smaller factions than in the United States, purportedly to bring about more "community spirit."

And what a good life for women! One has been elected president even, as if changing gender for the highest office in the land would make politics more effective or women more respected. There is absolutely no prostitution because of communal living and open sex. (No mention is made of venereal diseases.) And after much research, women get to choose the man whom they deem worthy of fathering their children.

Jealousy, or rivalry, is virtually unheard of. (Part of this story seems to center around "Women's Lib" as the author would like to see it.)

Everybody in Ecotopia accepts abortion as one solution to population control--after a long debate. How simple. No family planning programs. No abortion clinic bombings. No wild demonstrations. No voting. No sex education classes. Just conduct a lengthy debate and get rid of the abortion controversy. Also, Ecotopian citizens came to the agreement that additional children, that is to say more than are needed to round out a family, are more of a burden than an advantage in a highly advanced industrial society. On the other hand, they all believe in free and open sex. It is no big deal to walk down the avenue and find a couple copulating beneath a sacred tree. (The Oregon spotted owls would have a bird's eye-view, assuming that Ecotopians managed to save this endangered species from the greedy logging companies that had attempted to cut the old growth timber, which is this adorable, fluffy, eye-blinking TV personality's habitat.) And now that the over-population threat seems to be solved in Ecotopia, its citizens are encouraged to participate in family farms again (???)

Education in Ecotopia seems to be about as ho-hum as usual with field trips resembling Girl and Boy Scout functions. At an early age, children learn the ethics of hard work. Never mind the technological age that gave Ecotopians the 20-hour work week. But then Ecotopians blame technology for ecological imbalance, not its misuse. (Here we have a pro-gun type mentality in reverse: People don't kill the environment; technology kills the environment.) One difference in education here is the schools are managed and controlled by the teachers. To a great extent the children are being taught with methods resembling those in the United States with the only emphasis on math being how to earn a living.

Sound familiar? And with teachers in control, what happens to the infamous bureaucracy of superintendent, principal and PTA? With the elimination of the holy three and teachers in control, it is more than likely that parents will be expected to be seen but not heard, at least not too loudly. One thing to be said for teachers here is they see the importance of diversion from boredom. Children are allowed more physical liberties than in the United States. One supposes by this the author means that children won't be strapped to a desk all those hours but will have breaks that rest their minds while exercising their bodies, a break for teachers as well.

Although wildlife must be hunted with bows and arrows, people can own guns. Violent war games take place where Ecotopian citizens are occasionally killed and often wounded by spears, the only weapons allowed in this cozy little activity. War games take the place of competitive sports, you see, tempering all that violence so inherent in human nature, even replacing the need for war. Conversely, sports are based on personal initiative rather than on incentive as is common in the United States. Evidently war games also take the place of violence in sports.

Crime in Ecotopia is at a minimum, making the streets safe for citizens, although embezzlement and fraud crop up occasionally. You know how Price Systems are. One reason for the reduction in crime is there are no restrictions on growing or smoking pot, and the government curbed drug traffic by taking it over as a monopoly. And the reason government here enjoys beneficial reforms is because of voluntary measures. Just what these voluntary measures are and who volunteers for them seems a little obscure. Ecotopians don't worry about income, sales or property taxes.

A land tax seems to cover it all. Those who earn more recognition because of valuable contributions to society will be allowed to work less than the 20-hour week to make up for it. (No mention is made of human-hours versus machine-hours.) And a guaranteed minimum wage keeps even the laziest citizen from abject poverty, although 20 hours of work a week will boost wages above the poverty level, so incentive continues to play a big part in Ecotopian life--except in sports of course.

Supervisors in the job force respect their workers and often take advice from them. Why? They are elected to their jobs and want to keep them--not picked for their qualifications. So the only change here is a reversal in status quo, making workers no more compassionate than their overseers were in the past.

Scientists are not paid for their advice as this would only corrupt them. How they make their living remains a mystery. Why they prefer to stay in a small nation that doesn't respect them is an even bigger mystery. And why single out scientists to not get paid for advice? Why not politicians, insurance agents, lawyers or psychiatrists, the modern-day witch doctors?

Some Ecotopian body of thought came to the decision that, by employing standardization, products can be manufactured so they are long lasting and easily repaired; that there is no reason why Ecotopian vehicles couldn't be automated entirely due to standardization and its resultant simplification. (Don't look now, but we're talking about science and its capabilities through engineering expertise.)

Hospital treatment certainly seems more humane, more caring, and so different from what we have come to expect. Each patient has a nurse of the opposite sex assigned especially to her, or to him, for the entire time spent recovering while in the hospital. Our hero, injured by a spear in a war game, never ceased to be amazed at the beautiful nurse provided him who sat at his bedside, massaging him periodically. All kinds of titillating things happened during his recovery. One can't help but wonder if the same procedure applies to everyone--say octogenarians--or suppose our patient had been assigned a 250 pound middle-aged hardliner ready for retirement.

Even Van Gogh and Picasso take second seats to Ecotopian talent, which is encouraged and always comes first. Although most Ecotopians have record collections, they will not go out of their way to hear a famous group if one of their own is performing at the same time. It's amazing how these Ecotopians got to be a nation of sheep in such a short time. But what a

boon this would be for new talents who find it extremely difficult to compete with Beethoven, Chopin, Picasso, Elvis Presley or other long-ago artists.

So William Weston left his ex-wife, two children and girlfriend to live with the beautiful MARRISA (not his nurse) who chose him to father her children. Of course his children in the United States will have visitation rights in Ecotopia. Since this is fiction and anything goes, one must say this for the author: He is endowed with a terrific imagination.

What is unimaginable is what Ralph Nader, Consumer Advocate, has to say about this book: "The book's impact...is the breadth of perspective that envelops the reader. None of the happy conditions in Ecotopia are beyond the technical or resource reach of our society." This from an intelligent man who ignores factual evidence on social trends offered to him for investigation by Technocracy's supporters, even though this evidence has been brought to his attention more than once. Instead he supports fiction that is wrought under a silly Price System where citizens never cross the boundaries of Ecotopia in pursuit of a better life, even though they could make more money--fiction at its ultimate.

The author molds his territory with a mixture of obsolete methods of social management and technological advancement. The only other internal combustion engine to be let into Ecotopia besides service trucks were the taxi that transported William Weston 20 miles into Ecotopia--and only if the wind was blowing in the right direction. But Ecotopians enjoy an intelligent magnetic-levitated train system. For the most part, though, Callenbach glosses over the vital problems that confront any society with simple-sounding solutions. Some problems seem to have reached their solution by the stroke of an Aladdin's Lamp to produce the problem-solving jinni, or its equivalent magic wand.

But then in the United States we have our Star Wars program and news media horoscope and astrology hoopla columns, full-page articles featuring Sasquach and UFO sightings, not to mention some of our best scientist's still pursuing outer space for intelligent life. In the meantime our educational systems corrode into political institutions where the pursuit of profit seems to be the only learning worth while.

The Tragedy of our Dying Forests

Lois M. Scheel

1992

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletter Oct 1992, No. 108

In Southwestern Oregon you can look almost anywhere and see reddish brown conifers, signifying a spread of disease and insect infestation. Aerial surveys measure the death of these trees.

Knowledge of our forest ecosystem is disgracefully low. With more emphasis placed on managing money rather than on learning about the important part nature plays in their lives, most children grow up showing little interest in science.

A recent headline in the New York Times News Service reads: *TEACH KIDS THE VALUE OF MONEY*. Then the writer says: "...Children must learn to earn, spend, save, borrow and invest if they are to function as adults..." By the time today's children grow up, attention to the importance of money and skill in how to make it work best for them may have been the cause of eliminating the remaining forest ecosystem for their future.

Some component of science should be a required subject. If earlier generations of children had been taught the importance of preserving our forests: how they replenish our underground wells, streams and rivers by passing rainwater to them through an intricate root system; how their protective canopy prevents snow from melting all at once, distributing it gradually so it isn't wasted in floods; how forest streams preserve spawning grounds for fish; how the trees cool the atmosphere; how our forests hold topsoil in a firm grip, preventing it from washing or blowing away; how it protects wildlife, providing nourishment and sanctuary--perhaps we would have healthy forests today.

In 1948 Aldo Leopold wrote: "We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. There is no other way for land to survive the impact of mechanized man, nor for us to reap from it the esthetic harvest it is capable, under science, of contributing to culture."

Ebonics

Pam Gill

1997

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 2nd quarter 1997, No. 324

The question of Ebonics has been trashed all over the electronic and printed media. This subject from a Technocratic perspective, which the media avoids covering, addresses the subject in a different light.

The author is an English teacher in an inner-city school in San Francisco, writing to the Editor of the San Francisco Chronicle.

`` As an English teacher, I have followed the debate on Ebonics. As a person attending Christmas parties, I have listened to several heated conversations on the topic. To me the question seems beside the point, except that in our social-economic system, all points seem cash-driven; bilingual funds may, or may not, be forthcoming to quell the waters. Meanwhile, why are so many Afro-American students doing so poorly in school? It isn't because `` public forum speaking" is, or isn't, taught.

Most teachers acknowledge the realities of Black English, and would probably be even better off if they were more educated on the topic. I teach ``standard" English and I, myself, pick up Ebonics. When I wish to, I say ``She be goin'." I love the variety, rhythm, and expressiveness of Ebonics. Its use is not confined to African Americans.

So why are large numbers of African American students failing or barely scraping by? (And they aren't the only ones!) Here is the answer: Because so many live in economically deprived homes in economically deprived neighborhoods. Why is the infant mortality rate of Afro-American babies so high in Oakland, California? Not because ``I be pregnant" goes linguistically dishonored or misunderstood. It doesn't even get heard, or is heard in over-crowded, under-staffed medical facilities. If we are going to talk about schools and the ``education" we rave on about, we had better admit to the over-crowded and under-staffed conditions there too.

Is this system willing to pay for real change? It isn't and it can't. The only organization I've seen with a viable alternative is Technocracy. Maybe it will be taken seriously, maybe not. For now I will continue to teach English as quickly and accurately and humanely as I am able, but I assure you it is not nearly enough.

The Scientific, Technological Design For The Economy Of North America

Lila S. Wagner

1997

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 1st quarter 1997, No. 323

When we tell people that Technocracy's Technological Social Design would solve the problems of unemployment, poverty, waste, and ecological destruction that we are experiencing today, they ask, "What is this Design? Where is it? Can I see it? Can you explain it to me?"

For all those questioners, one of our writers, Lila Wagner, has written this coherent explanation of the Technocracy Design for a new social system.

The Scientific, Technological Design For The Economy Of North America Provides For:

- Complete economic security for every man, woman, and child from birth to death;
- Complete health care;

- Modern, energy-efficient housing for all;
- Education to the full extent of each individual's ability;
- Viable mass transit;
- Employment for all who are able to work and care for those who cannot; and
- Careful stewardship of the Continent's natural resources and environment.

BACKGROUND

As early as the winter of 1918-19, it became obvious to a group of outstanding scientists, engineers, and economists that technology was displacing man-hours of labor, leading to increased unemployment and lack of purchasing power. The group included Howard Scott, chief engineer; Frederick Ackerman, architect; Carl L. Alsberg, chemist; Allen Carpenter, M.D.; Stuart Chase, C.P.A.; L.K. Comstock, electrical engineer; Alice Barrows Fernandez, educator; Bassett Jones, electrical engineer; Benton Mackaye, forester; Leland Olds, statistician; Charles P. Steinmetz, electrical engineer; Richard C. Tolman, physicist; John Carol Vaughn, M.D.; Thorstein Veblen, educator; Charles H. Whitaker, housing expert; and Sullivan W. Jones, secretary.

Calling themselves the *Technical Alliance*, they embarked upon a survey of the energy and physical resources of the North American Continent. After fourteen years of intensive study, they were able to determine that North America had the resources, both physical and energy, and the know-how, to produce an abundance for all of its citizens. What it lacked was a viable method to distribute the abundance. This inability to distribute abundance had led to a depression in 1921, the unwise introduction of installment buying in the 1920s, the stock market crash of 1929, and the Great Depression.

The Technical Alliance determined that it was the efforts to preserve the Price System, a system which had functioned, albeit imperfectly, during the centuries of scarcity, that had led to the denouement of the '30s. They saw that a system that had grown out of conditions of scarcity could not function adequately to distribute abundance.

Requirements To Be Met

A system which could distribute abundance and satisfy the conditions listed above would need these features:

1. It must register continuously the energy converted in the total day-to-day operation of the Continent, both plant construction and maintenance, as well as the energy converted in the production of goods and services for personal consumption by the population.
2. By registering the energy converted, it would be possible to maintain a continuous inventory and to balance production with consumption, eliminating both scarcity of any one commodity and unnecessary resource depletion due to overproduction of some other.
3. This inventory could provide information as to the type of goods and services produced, where and how much had been used in order to give replacement information, and could, if desired, identify the user.
4. It must distribute goods and services to every member of the population, giving each individual citizen the widest possible choice in consuming his share of the Continental physical wealth.
5. It must guarantee that each individual's consuming power be his, or hers, alone, much as a Social Security number is assigned to each individual, and is not to be transferred to anyone else.

What Would Be The Means Of Distribution?

On each of these counts, money fails to meet the requirement for distributing abundance.

- It is not a measure of energy converted, or of production or consumption of goods and services.
- It can be transferred from one person to another, a fact which could deprive some citizens of their share of abundance, besides making fraud and bribery possible.
- It can be stashed away. In this connection it must be noted that any obstruction in a flow line, even at the consuming end, will eventually shut the line down; hence, money will not keep production moving evenly.

On all counts, money does not meet the requirements of a medium of distribution of abundance.

The mechanism that does meet the requirements is the energy degraded in the production of goods and services. This energy loss constitutes the *physical cost* of production and can be stated in units of work (ergs or kwh) or in units of heat (kg calories or BTUs.) We can therefore measure quite accurately the energy lost in any given industrial process, as well as the total physical cost of operating the Continent.

After subtracting the energy required to operate the Continent as a whole -- new plant and maintenance thereof, roads, housing, hospitals, schools, local transport, continental transport, communications, education, child care, and maintenance of public institutions -- the remainder would be shared equally by all adult citizens in the form of personal energy credits. In the U.S. alone, in 1992, more than 81 quadrillion BTUs were consumed, with 62 quadrillion being used for overall operating, leaving 19 quadrillion to be consumed by the personal needs of the population. That should supply every North American with his favorite personal items, all else being supplied *as a right of citizenship*.

Keep in mind: *to be consumed*. Since there is a definite limit to the amount of goods and services one individual can consume, it is both reasonable and efficient to issue equal numbers of personal energy units to each adult, male and female alike. It is anticipated that the number will be greater than anyone can reasonably use before the units expire, at which time new units would be issued. These energy credits would be usable only by the person to whom they are issued; no one else could "cash" them. Since everyone would have his own plentiful supply, there would be no point in transferring credits to any other person -- or stealing someone else's!

HOW WILL SOCIETY BE ORGANIZED IN A "TECHNATE"?

First, realize that it will take years, even decades, to overcome the thought-patterns and habits that have been the norm in the Price System. The urge to acquire things in order to gain recognition must give way to a desire to excel in one's chosen field of endeavor. Whole new complexes of energy-efficient housing interspersed with green areas and local cultural facilities must take the place of the millions of units of substandard housing and the decaying infrastructure which exist today. Taxes and monetary debt will be unknown. Crimes involving property -- 95% of all crime -- will no longer be a problem. Disparity between rich and poor will vanish and, with it, eventually, racism, sexism, classism, ageism -- most of today's troubles.

Can we do a global makeover? Not until we have put our own house (read Continent) in order. To bite off more than we can chew is a sure prescription for failure. When things are

running smoothly in North America, then we can invite young people from other countries to come and observe what can be adapted to their situation.

After The Period Of Transition Is Over, the children born into the Technate will enjoy *lifetime* economic security and education to age 25, as a right of citizenship. At 25, after being exposed to the many careers available, they will choose the one best suited to their talents for their life's work -- a work life that will last probably 20 years of 4-day weeks of 4-hour days with 78 days continuous vacation each year. At about age 45, then, they will retire at full compensation, free to travel, enjoy a hobby, study, whatever.

The actual operation of the Technate will continue as society operates today -- those with the expertise in the various lines of industry and the professions will carry on all necessary functions. We will be well rid of political interference and the financial superstructure, neither of which contributes one iota to the physical operation of the Continent. Those people who are currently engaged in politics or finance will either retire, or, if under 45, will find a line of work suited to them.

In order to operate a mechanism as complex as an entire Continent, the needed functions must be divided into manageable units. There will be industrial sequences (agriculture, manufacturing, mining, etc.), service sequences (education, medicine, etc.), and research sequences. Each sequence will have its own director chosen from among its most capable personnel by his or her peers. These sequence directors will together form an advisory body, similar to the U.S. President's Cabinet, which will advise the Continental Director, chosen from among the sequence directors by his or her peers, on matters of policy. Through such a vertical alignment, each person will be heard, making possible the most completely democratic society ever devised.

Any desirable features of societal organization not specifically mentioned here, for lack of space, must be assumed to be included at the most optimum level. In fact, the increasing population, coupled with the flagrant depletion of resources which has occurred as a result of 20th century Price System excesses, makes it imperative that *Technocracy's Design*, with its emphasis on balancing production with consumption in order to conserve natural resources, its insistence that only goods of optimum quality be manufactured for the same reason -- in order to conserve natural resources, its equalizing of income and opportunity in order to avoid the chaos which looms if we continue on our present course, be adopted as soon as reasonably possible.

Letter -- Education

Pam Gill

1996

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 1st quarter 1996, No. 319
-

Editor, Times-Colonist
 P.O. Box 300 Victoria
 British Columbia V9W 2N4
 Canada

Dear Editor:

I am writing in response to Denise Helm's Oct. 2, 1995 article, "Teacher Burnout." I am an inner-city high school teacher from San Francisco, and I found much to identify with in this article. Unfortunately, I can't readily supply comparable statistics for California. I do, however, know that hundreds of teachers in San Francisco apply for the much smaller allowable number of sabbaticals. I have certainly seen statistics which state that over half of all teachers leave the field of teaching within five years of beginning to teach. I personally know many teachers on leave, on early retirement, about to leave, and I myself took off one year without pay immediately after becoming a tenured teacher.

I was impressed with your description of a survey which concluded, "Teachers' chief concern and frustration was not being able to meet students' social, emotional and physical needs" Altruistic as it may sound, I agree this is what burns out teachers. We see a vast array of problems and barely make a conscious acknowledgement of one before the next unmet need parades itself by us. Often, there are several vying for our attention at one time. I don't think teachers are unusually compassionate human beings, nor are we particularly selfless. (Although romanticized stories which promise unwarranted hope for our current system would have you believe we should and could be). But we are there in the schools, witness to the needs students have. Also, at any moment we can be held responsible for one of these needs not being met: "Why wasn't a mental health referral done?", "Why was a mental health referral done?", "the parent tells us he wasn't even notified of ...", etc. Too much responsibility, too little help, too little power.

Another constant is that students must test the limits of adult authority. It is a healthy and necessary part of growing up, exploring the world; finding a place in it. However, when students are painfully restricted in their access to adults (parents, gone or working; relatives, distant, gone or working; community, skimpy, if any) they will test those adults they do have access to -- their teachers. It becomes tricky and even maddening for a teacher to have to interrupt the lesson numerous times to display what the limits of adult power are in that classroom. And students are best comforted to find those limits are in place; that the teacher is strong, confident, and won't permit the students to run riot over the learning process. But give that teacher 150 students, too many responsibilities, etc., and the students may soon find the teacher is not that strong.

I have my own personal threshold which finds the during-class phone calls unnerving, the bells annoying, unnecessary paperwork insulting, and on. I love to teach, and a serious reality is I need a paycheck.

With these givens, I have concluded I will make the best of the situation until an alternative can replace it. The sooner the better. There is an organization called "Technocracy" which has the best alternative I have seen to date. Over sixty years ago members researched the problems and resources of the North American Continent, including our educational system, and came to some conclusions. The gist of those conclusions has not changed. We need a new system to fit the day and age in which we live. We need our students to be educated, protected, and encouraged, instead of warehoused, threatened, and depressed.

I see so much classroom behavior that is either too aggressive or too passive. Animal populations under too much stress become both overly aggressive and overly passive. No

individual teacher, or group of teachers, can remediate an entire population under increasing stress. We need to restructure society so that our future is all that it could be.

There are many published articles by Technocracy which describe proposals for organizing our future, and explain why we must do so. Technocracy is an educational/research organization and printed information is readily available.

First Things First

Alma Mawson

1995

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletters, Oct. 1995, No. 140

With a great deal of interest, I have read everything in the August 8 and 22, 1994 issue of Awake magazine. My overall impression is that its writers are attempting to build the now-mandatory social structure from the top down -- morals first. Physical law demands that any earthly structure be built from the ground up. Provide physical comforts first.

Any building, in order to be structurally sound, must have, first of all, a solid base. The superstructure then follows, and a superstructure can be only as strong and enduring as the quality of the foundation on which it is built. Even the most devout ministers must have shelter, clothing, food, etc., before they go out to preach the gospel. First things first!

One of the Awake articles states: ``Evolution diminishes the Bible authority in the minds of many." One must ask why? Is it because a greater understanding of science has diminished that authority? There is much evidence to prove the theory of evolution and, as humankind's knowledge and logical understanding of natural law increases, ``knowing" takes precedence over ``believing."

Awake also says, ``clearly, making money dominates the thinking of many young people." and ``yet, youths are merely responding to the ethical tone set by their elders." The fact is that they are doing what is required in order to succeed and survive in a competitive, vicious social system! People behave according to the environment in which they find themselves, and the environment provided by the monetary system causes the bad behavior we see all around us today. So -- let us get at the CAUSE of all the bad behavior. Remove the monetary system. First things first!

The Awake magazine is put out by a religious organization with a large following; therefore, it has a tremendous responsibility regarding the future of this physical world. If you are going to continue training your flock that morals come first, you must take the responsibility for a large portion of our continuing earthly ailments.

In one article, the writer speaks of "all races living together in peace." The writer goes on to say, "Scientific evidence is conclusive that all men clearly belong to one species." Yes, indeed. If one wants to prove a thing, one must rely on science.

Awake continues: "Satan's influence must be eliminated in human affairs," then asks, "Will these things ever happen? Is there any basis for believing they will?" Then: "Jesus Christ revealed how racial prejudice could be eliminated when he commanded his followers to 'love one another' just as He loved them." The writer goes on to quote from Romans 12.10: "in showing honor to one another, take the lead."

In order to survive and prosper, it is impossible to "love one another." In a dog-eat-dog environment, we must learn to eat dog before dog eats us! So, one answer is: switch from a monetary system to Energy Accounting as proposed by Technocracy. Physical change takes more than praying together. It requires ACTION "works"; not just "words", or prayer.

Yes, spiritual and physical needs must be tied together. "Every kingdom divided against itself goes to ruin; and no town, no household that is divided against itself can stand" (Matthew 12.25, The New English Bible). The item further says it is "beyond human effort to do so." The fact is that it is not beyond human effort to do so!!!! A scientific governance would rid us of racial prejudice because we wouldn't be competing for jobs or trying, by any method we could scheme up, to gain control of ever more money.

In one article on kidney stones, the writer states, "But with recent technological advances, the need for open surgical removal is rare." and "...if you should have another kidney stone...there are improved methods for treating them." Science provides these "new methods." New developments are the result of scientific study.

In writing about Nyalaland and its endangered animal population, the writer speaks of that "Paradise Unspoiled by Man." The conclusion is: "...God will intervene and save the earth from ruin." So, it seems that all we have to do is pray? And wait, eh? We, the people, have made a mess of our house, earth, so isn't it our responsibility to clean it up rather than pray and wait for an alleged supreme being to come and do it for us?

The writers of Awake tell us what kind of social structure must be built, but it takes a carpenter to do the constructing! Jesus is said to have been a carpenter; any carpenter knows that it is impossible to build a strong and secure superstructure if you don't, first of all, construct an adequate foundation. The installation of Technocracy's design for an intelligent social operation would provide that strong base. First things first.

Another article states that "clearly, making money dominates the thinking of many young people with alarming consequences." Well, people of all ages must have money before they can have anything! The article continues: "More than half the young people questioned admitted bending the rules to get ahead." Then "the landmarks that told us right from wrong aren't there any more. They've been hammered away." Yes, hammered away by the steadily deteriorating monetary system wherein, in order to survive, people must bend the rules. It is a behavior pattern endemic to a dying social system.

In commenting on Darwin's Origin of Species, the writer says: "Evolution thus diminished the Bible's authority in the minds of many." and "the impact on morality was devastating."

No jobs, no income, is a demoralizing experience for people, regardless of their age. The article further states, "...the churches have a poor record in providing moral leadership," and "Widespread disillusionment with religion thus prevails." and "Today's morals are

drifting toward nothing less than total moral collapse. We need a guide that comes from someone higher than ourselves -- compare Proverbs 14.12; Jeremiah 10.23. Such a guide exists."

A moneyless method of social operations is most assuredly something ``higher." It is the first step in solving our problems. Because people have to operate in an inadequate monetary system, their conscience naturally takes a beating. A government, based on science, would certainly act as a guide to man's vastly improved behavior.

The Awake writer says that although the Bible acknowledges that ``dishonest people may seem to prosper, it still urges us to stay honest." Further: ``...the finder's keeper's mentality has made thieves of our potentially honest people." The writer says, the Bible ``...encourages kindness, fairness, justice, truth, honor, decency, a sense of responsibility, and humane concerns for others."

Ignored is any mention of the fact that it is our monetary system of government that is basically at fault. Attempts to make people ``moral" within the confines of an immoral system is impossible. Social change must come FIRST. To put morals above physical needs is to put the cart before the horse. Change the method of social operations and morals will improve, because then there no longer will be ``incentives" for the immoral behavior that is so rampant today.

Regarding money, the writer says: ``Jesus said he would destroy the temple (Mark 14.57, 58; 15.29)." Does that mean we should tolerate the vicious money system because He is coming to straighten out the mess we have created? ``...the anti-Semitism in Christendom has been due to the selfish prejudices of people who have been Christians in name only." Then, further, ``...the existence of counterfeit money does not disprove the existence of real money."

What is ``real" money? Money is the nothing you get for something before you can have anything! The concept of money has no physical reality. It doesn't measure anything in the physical world. Thinking in terms of money is an ``addiction", and ``getting by" in such a system does, indeed, cause many people to have a low opinion of themselves and their fellow human beings.

In another article on ``*Growing Old With Understanding: the poor living conditions of many of the elderly are deplorable.*" No solution to this situation is suggested, except to ``assure" the elderly that, in the final analysis, ``old people, above all, should seek to strengthen their religious bonds." The writer goes on to say that the pursuits older people should involve themselves in, in order to enjoy a better, more fulfilling life, is to pursue hobbies. Many old people are existing on old-age pensions, which aren't enough to allow them to pay for involvement in various activities.

The article states: ``The telephone is a wonderful instrument for old persons." In making that suggestion, we should not forget that (1) Scientists invented and improved the telephone, and (2) Many old people don't have the money to afford a telephone.

The writer offers this consolation, though: ``Even those sleeping in death will awaken to that kind of life in God's righteous world, which will soon replace the present, unsatisfactory system of things." The writer's assurance is that, ``living today according to such heart-satisfying values is like building a bank account for the future." Technocracy's Energy Accounting System offers a ``bank account" that would provide for our future while we are still living. Is there anything immoral about that?

An article on immunization states that, ``Today, immunization programs have been generally effective in controlling many diseases..." Who discovered all of the things relating to immunization? Scientists, of course.

Another article warns people about the danger of children swallowing coins. In a Technate, there would be no coins to swallow. Another problem solved by the application of the scientific method.

An item about *Troubled Youngsters* concluded with the statement: ``...government officials are convinced that `the root of many problems lies in the home,' and all indications are that most of the problems are money-related."

Physical things can only be assessed by one's physical senses. Nonphysical things can only be guessed at, and that is the area that is causing so much confusion and conflict. A path based on FACTS, rather than on ``beliefs", provides the way to peace and brotherly love.

In Fond Memory: Stella K. Block 1910--1996

1997

Published in:

- The Northwest Technocrat, 1st quarter 1997, No. 346

Stella K. Block died on November 1, 1996. She was a long-time member of the Organization, Technocracy Inc. and an integral part of it. She joined Technocracy Inc., on December 12, 1938 and became part of the Continental Headquarters staff in 1965. She was one of the last members to have worked closely with the founder of Technocracy Inc., Howard Scott.

Stella contributed to the work of Technocracy Inc. in many important and diverse ways: She was the organization's Secretary, Treasurer, as well as President of North American Associates. She also wrote extensively for the magazines and contributed ideas for many of the "Briefs"; the popular "Brief" WOMEN was devised and written by her. She corresponded with many individuals and groups in her continuing quest to inform and acquaint as many people as possible about Technocracy.

Stella was an interesting and stimulating person to be with and her interest and knowledge on a wide range of subjects was evidence of her continuing quest to obtain relevant information. She was dedicated to the stated goals of Technocracy, and to that end she devoted her life in an unswerving service to Technocracy. To the very end she was alert and interested in everything around her.

To all who knew Stella, she was an example, someone to look up to, and who, by her standards, provided leadership. We, who knew her, loved and respected her. The members

of Technocracy Inc. owe her a debt of gratitude. She will be sorely missed, but will remain in the hearts and minds of us all. Thank you Stella, you made a great contribution to humanity.

Just Imagine...

Lois M. Scheel

1994

Published in:

- Northwest Area News, May 1994, No. 124

Imagination. How important is it? Most of us believe we have imagination, but how often do we put it to work for us? Do we even think about it? If we let our imagination idle, how can we understand what others feel: their frustrations, their fears, their joys, their wants, their needs; how can we understand what we feel or what we would do in an adverse situation?

An Avon lady once said she found that her well-off customers were much more thoughtful and polite than her customers who lived in poor neighborhoods, in rundown rentals, and who owned old beat-up cars or owned no car at all. She further said that it seemed as though the poorer the housewife, the more she put on airs as though she was "above me." this puzzled her. Evidently her imagination lay in limbo.

S.I. Hayakawa used his active imagination when he wrote the first chapter in his excellent book, *Language in Action*, first published in 1939. He gives an interesting hypothetical case of two communities and how differently each handled the unemployment problem. In **A-town** the city legislators as well as the unemployed had been brought up to believe that anyone could find a job if he tried hard enough. Since many people remained unemployed, even those who searched diligently for work, the city legislators, being kindly persons, did not want to see these unemployed persons and their families go hungry. So they set up a "self-respect" program that was sure to get people off relief. The moral disapproval of the community would be at work at all times. Suggestions were made to print the unemployed' names at designated intervals or to take away their vote until their shame brought them to terms with their own negligence. Surely they would be grateful for the small income provided them, an income they didn't have to work for. Undoubtedly they would do anything to get off relief.

But there weren't enough jobs to go around. The people on relief became more and more disrespectful; they accused the city legislators of snooping; they claimed that they were just as good as anyone else. Some of them committed suicide. Many of them went into crime to make money rather than accept relief from those who demoralized them. Besides, there

was more money to be made in crime. Many wound up in jail. Family relations deteriorated. Long-time friendships failed. Children were ostracized at school by their peers.

These ingrates proved to the upper crust of **A-town** that giving people something for nothing demoralized them. **A-town** became divided into the "haves" and the "have-nots", which brought about class hatred.

Then there was **B-ville**. One alderman convinced his peers that unemployment, sickness, accident, fire, tornado, or death, hits unexpectedly in modern society, irrespective of the victim's merits or deserts. He further convinced them that **B-ville's** homes, parks, streets, industries and everything else the village could be proud of had been built in part by these same people who were now unemployed. Why not consider the work they had done for their village as a premium paid to their community against a time of misfortune. And why not consider monthly payments to them now as insurance claims against their misfortune.

A ceremony took place in **B-ville** where the first checks were presented with much positive fanfare, making the recipients of the insurance claims feel much better about themselves as newly unemployed citizens. Their children did not suffer abuse at school from their peers. No one committed suicide. They did not feel as though they were failures. Crime became nonexistent. And the city legislators were looked upon with respect by these citizen policy holders.

Of course, Mr. Hayakawa's intention in writing this book was to point out the importance of language and understanding it and the importance of making others understand it. But his "story with a moral", as he calls it, also says a lot about the human condition and about mental and behavioral characteristics of individuals and groups.

Any perceptive person can see that **A-town** hints at our own unfair system where the unemployed and the underemployed, through no fault of their own, are looked down on. Some of these people will never be employed again, especially those who are just under the retirement age—too young for pension benefits or Social Security and too old to be employed by companies looking for younger employees so they can pay them less for their "inexperience." And as technology advances, more jobs disappear, so why aren't we insuring these citizens against hard times as their birthright?

People just can't imagine the connection between crime and despair. Perhaps some of these unemployed people, like the desperate ones in **A-town**, would rather take a chance on going into crime for sustenance and possibly landing in jail rather than suffer the degradation of peer pressure. At least in jail they would have a roof over their heads, paid for by the same taxpayers who probably could never imagine the advantages of **B-ville's** social insurance program, not only to the unemployed but to themselves as well.

And how does our government want to handle the problem of crime? Build more jails. Hire more cops. Three strikes and you're out. With enough media hype to convince them, the citizens would rather spend more of their tax money to support a bigger prison system, put more cops on the beat and more of its citizens in jail than on getting to the source of the problem and possibly abolishing it altogether.

Suppose you walk into a supermarket and take in the overall picture of its contents. Look at all that food. In fresh produce or the meat department, what happens to the excess food that doesn't sell? Is it offered to the hungry, or do they have to dig it out of dumpsters after it is tossed out? Can you imagine yourself being surrounded by all this good food while you go hungry because you don't have the money to buy enough food to sustain yourself? Can

you imagine the anger that might build up in you? Especially since you are not lazy, but there just isn't a job available?

And the nonsense on TV. Advertisements of the good life abound. Most sitcoms portray comfortable living quarters in nice homes where everyone has plenty of food to eat and more than enough clothes to wear, even in single-parent homes. Poverty doesn't exist in sitcoms. You can tell because everyone is deliriously happy. The poor who view these lies know they are lies, so you can imagine the frustration building up in them.

While so many people look down on other people who can't make it in a vicious system that provides for some but not for others, they think nothing of the really big welfare recipients gobbling up their tax dollars: oil, automobile, S&L's, big-time farmers, defense, retired military personnel, retired politicians and more. How many taxpayers complained about this juicy tidbit, excerpted from Parade's special Intelligence Report, 5-19-91:

"Congress has authorized \$60,000 for two gold medals, to be sculpted by the U.S. Mint for General Colin L. Powell and General H. Norman Schwarzkopf. Powell is chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Schwarzkopf is allied commander in the Persian Gulf." While Congress shells out appropriations for meaningless baubles, our people go hungry.

With our advanced technology and our dwindling, but still sufficient natural resources, we can distribute enough goods and services for everyone on this Continent. Why aren't we doing it? An equitable distribution system for North America and the exchange of the value system for one of Measurement, insuring security from birth to death, would eliminate most crimes practically overnight and false pride in maintaining a work ethic in an era of diminishing jobs would gradually disappear. Imagine that!

Killing Softly

Lois M. Scheel

1994

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletter, Dec. 1994, No. 130

How does it feel to be killed softly? What a strange way to keep the peace: weapons that are kinder, gentler, a post-cold war strategy emerging from the U. S. Government's secret "black budget." Perhaps if these technology experts can come up with enough non-lethal weapons that "disable or destroy" without causing too much injury or damage, they can make war seem almost palatable and get on with their fun and games.

Here is a non-lethal laundry list described for the public:

(Excerpted from September/October 1994 issue of *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* from an article written by Steven Aftergood, Physicist.)

Infrasound: Very low-frequency sound generators could be tuned to incapacitate humans, causing disorientation, nausea, vomiting, or bowel spasms.

Laser weapons: Low-energy laser rifles could dazzle or temporarily blind enemy soldiers, or disable optical and infrared systems used for target acquisition, tracking, night vision, and range finding.

Super caustics: These highly acidic chemical agents can be millions of times more caustic than hydrofluoric acid. They could destroy the optics of heavily armored vehicles, as well as tires and structural metals.

Biological agents: Microbial cultures can be "designed" to chew up almost anything. Scientists at Los Alamos National Laboratory reviewed naturally occurring organisms that could be cultured to enhance certain characteristics. "As a result, we discovered a bacterium that degrades a specific material used in many weapons systems."

Acoustic beam weapons: High frequency acoustic "bullets" used against people would induce blunt-object trauma "like being hit by a baseball." According to a special technologies expert at Los Alamos, "Proof of principle has been established; we can make relatively compact acoustic weapons."

Combustion inhibitors: Chemical agents can be released into the atmosphere or introduced directly into fuel tanks to contaminate fuel or change its viscosity to degrade or disable all mechanical devices powered by combustion.

Mini-nukes: Mini-nuclear weapons with explosive yields of 100 tons ("The 'Soft Kill' Solution," March/April 1994 *Bulletin*).

Among the many other technologies under consideration in the Pentagon's non-lethal program are sticky foams to immobilize individuals, anti-traction chemicals to slicken roads and runways, high-power microwave generators, mechanical entanglements, holographic projectors, non-nuclear electromagnetic pulse generators, neural inhibitors, and wireless stun devices.

Now why can't these technology specialists work to find ways to enhance life instead of destroy...oh, oh. Mustn't forget that these new weapons are supposed to be non-lethal; even so, if they were actually put to use, they would certainly play havoc with natural resources not to mention promoting business for the nearest unscathed medical associations.

Sources:

1. "Antimaterial Technology," Los Alamos National Lab FY 1991 Progress Report, LA-12319-PR, p. 19.
2. Mark Tapscott and Kay Atwal, "New Weapons That Win Without Killing on DOD's Horizon," *Defense Electronics* (Feb. 1993), p. 41.
3. Elaine M. Grossman, "Pentagon to Set Priorities in Non-lethal Technologies, Weapons," *Inside the Air Force* (April 15, 1994), p.1.



A Non-Fiction Daily Drama -- A Day in the Life of a Teacher

Pam Edwards

1996

Published in:

- The Northwest Technocrat, 3rd quarter 1996, No. 344

In a recent science fiction movie, TWELVE MONKEYS, the hero is forced to live physically underground because the surface of the earth is too contaminated, and he is trapped in a totalitarian society in which the vast majority of humans have already died of a deadly virus. Immediate survival has taken precedence, as it does in so many Hollywood movies. Having traveled back in time to 1996 for a short research assignment, our hero waxes nostalgic about this time when the streets were crime ridden, there was no place to park, and homelessness and unemployment plagued the citizens. We could easily extend this list of contemporary complaints...and agree that to some extent suffering is relative. (Unless you're loved one was just a statistic in the wake of some ugly social breakdown).

I am a high school teacher on a spring break, one of the vacations for which teachers are envied. Going to the movies is a small luxury, a way most of us get to emulate the idle rich for a couple of hours. The truth is, that even with a break, I won't have much ``discretionary'' time or income to fool around with. For several weeks up to vacation, we teachers are anxiously awaiting time off. Our work isn't the back breaking, dawn to dusk labor of most people living a hundred years ago, but our work is outrageous. I often feel like I am on a unicycle and I can't look around me or I'll crash down. I must focus on the next trick which I control with my two hands and my rapidly pedaling feet.

I am vaguely aware of things I see in my peripheral vision...the students who only show up once a week, the boy who doesn't eat all day because his mother's been locked in a mental institution and his father is raising three kids on a full time job which pays \$600 a month, the incessant false fire alarms set off by wandering students and ignored entirely by everyone (God forbid there should ever be a fire,) the abysmally low level of basic skills, the threat that teachers will at any minute be held responsible for this lack of basic skills (beating our heads against the wall as it is to make enough noise to even get many students' attention.)

At home I have stacks of papers to grade. I am proud that I got my honors class to do research papers, but now I have to grade them. My garage needs cleaning, my yard needs work, and my child needs help. I am a single parent. There is very little community for support if anything goes wrong. I hate being sick as it reminds me of how vulnerable I am. There is so much which if I don't do it, doesn't get done. This is at home and at school.

Within an hour of starting my vacation, I walked by a coffee shop and because I saw two men I know, I sat down on the bench in the sun. I have never done this although they do for hours at a stretch. I watched them, as if programmed; make cracks about driving skills of people parking their cars. They said in unison, "That's right, back up till you hit something!" I listened to them express admiration for Ronald Reagan and George Bush. I joked that they had chosen some mighty dull heroes. We didn't discuss these politicians' attacks on human rights of women. Five minutes of this "leisure" sent me scurrying off the streets for cover.

Male supremacy is alive and well.

Rather than imagining how much worse things could be, as TWELVE MONKEYS does, I can envision how much better things could be. If the school building weren't collapsing, if I taught two or three courses instead of five (actually six at the moment,) if the students weren't suffering from gross inequalities of access to basic necessities. (My modest living circumstances put me in a class way above and beyond most of my students...and this is true of almost all teachers versus students in inner-city public schools. The opposite situation prevails in many private schools, with teachers living much more humble existences than the wealthy families of their students. Both these extremes are not truly healthy if social and intellectual well-being and progress are primary goals of education.)

In so many other ways I can picture things better. What if I didn't have to spend most of my time anxious that I might forget some of the dozens of niggling details that comprise contemporary schools and modern life? Each day I get home from work and hop on the phone (if it is not too late) with the insurance company, the rain gutter man, the dentist, some mutual fund agent, tax accountant, bank employee, librarian and so on.

I recently had no less than six conversations with my home insurance company; they had almost doubled my premium. I was told, "If you do this (smoke detectors, alarms, extinguishers) and if you have that (sheer walling, bolting, earthquake proofing) then we'll give you a 10% discount on this premium and a blah, blah reduction on that. Plus we need to come and take pictures and measurements because of new regulations instituted due to the Oakland fire."

I accommodated all those demands, made appointments; we took pictures and I helped measure. Then a month later an entirely different agent, same insurance, calls to tell me he is coming to do all the measuring and photographing. I say "No! It has been done." He said, "Well, I don't see the paper work here so let's do it again." "No!" I persisted, "That is the stupidest thing I've ever heard. I have the name of the person who came, the date, the time! You track it down!" He insisted it would be easier if he just came out and did it all again. Was he trying to pad his job? So many people are worried their jobs will disappear. Still I held my ground. Maybe my house insurance is invalid now? What do I know? After a long day at work, I can't tolerate some of the waste and inefficiency this system spews out, even if it resembles some I spew out myself in my job.

If I do get a few minutes to relax, I'm really lucky if one of my friends has the same time available. They are just as swamped with work, schools, kids and chores as I am.

And I ask myself, do we really have to live like this? Technocracy says we don't. I have a suspicion Technocracy is right. I thought so even before crossing paths with Technocracy. We have a major distribution problem. Technocracy shows how to solve it by giving all North American citizens equal access to all goods and services.

Maybe the hero in TWELVE MONKEYS had it wrong, but we'd better not be grateful for a crime ridden present when the present may be the precursor to a nightmarish future. I don't want to be an alarmist, but how much more niggling can things get?

Who is Looking After the Kids?

Cyril Large and Bette Hiebert

1997

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 3rd quarter 1997, No. 325

For over 60 years, members of the organization of Technocracy have been trying to look after your children, but we have been thwarted at every turn. We have spent time and money since the 1930s trying to wake up the public so historians will not have to ask: ``Why was nothing done in time?" Our concern and work is not so much for ourselves, but for the generations following after us.

Many Technocrats, who have been members of this organization almost since its inception, have worried about the fate of children -- that, now, makes three generations. We are still wondering why you didn't listen to us, because our children and your children are now facing a desperate situation -- the loss of our environment; the loss of our society. Throughout those sixty or so years, along with other people of their generation, they struggled too, to put food on the table for their families, to educate their children, have mourned over the deaths of their children killed in a useless war, have witnessed the struggles their surviving children have had to endure to be able to provide for their grandchildren. And now, toward the end of their lives, they are being tortured again when they see that nothing has changed: their great-grandchildren are being dragged through the same poverty that they and their children all went through. Plus the fact that more useless wars have been fought; more of their young killed.

Ethan B. Kapstein, director of studies at the U.S. Council on Foreign Affairs, in his book, *Workers & the World Economy* wrote that: ``The world may be moving inexorably toward one of those tragic moments that will lead historians to ask, *Why was nothing done in time?* And in the book, *Shakedown* by pollster, Angus Reid, he echoes those words in this statement: ``the tragic moment that Kapstein refers to, is precisely the one that lies at the center of my analysis: the problems confronting workers in the global economy. These issues are part of a world-wide phenomenon that Kapstein compares to that which occurred in the 1930s: economic dislocation and the unwillingness of leaders to recognize the profound problems confronting their citizens. I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I know this: we must move quickly -- individually and collectively -- or the historians will ask the same of Canada: ``*Why was nothing done in time?*"

Of course, one must recognize that, for the \$30 or \$40 that you would have to pay for their books, by reading them, you won't find the answer to that question, because, neither Kapstein nor Angus Reid provided any solution. Also, along with the \$40 you would have to fork over for the touted Jeremy Rifkin's book, in his *The End of Work*, all you will get is another costly stall on the way to the abundant life that a Technocracy offers you.

The saddest reflection on the poverty that all these generations have endured is that *it need never have been endured*. There has been a solution -- to do away with poverty -- for over sixty years. The Organization of Technocracy offered a workable technological design at that time. Fourteen years of research by seventeen very well-known and respected scientists, the likes of Thorstein Veblen, and others: engineers, educators, architects, bio-chemists, mathematical technologists, forester-naturalists, had gone into planning a safe, peaceful, and bountiful environment in which people could be healthy, well-educated, and able to enjoy their lives, working at jobs they loved, and participating in whatever sport or hobby or artistic expression they wished. There would have been no debt, no environmental destruction; and probably no wars. Certainly, no poverty.

Technocrats have always wondered when people would reach their limit of social tolerance. Over 60 years have passed without any real change in the social field, except for the worse. Your children deserved better. Why didn't you listen to us? We Technocrats wanted a better life for children. What is this generation doing about their care? We hope they never have to ask this question: Why was nothing done in time? Because, Time IS running out!

Minority Causes

Helen Marian

1991

Published in:

- The Northwest Technocrat, 1st quarter 1991, No. 322
-

Earth Day enthusiasts are one of many well-meaning minority groups; their special target is the "litter bug."

Other popular minority groups and their corresponding "foes" include: feminists against masculine citizens, abortionists against anti-abortionists, blacks against whites, whites against Hispanics, democrats against republicans, religionists against atheists, rich against poor.

Regardless of the minority to which you belong, your only chance to solve your problem is to support the interests of the majority, not merely your own minority. And, more importantly, the majority to which you belong is the citizenry of the North American Continent.

Technocracy, alone, points out that the real problem is the Price System itself, which is adversely affecting all citizens of this Continent with its waste and inefficiency.

As a North American citizen, your home is this Continent. Its problems are your problems. You can only solve these problems as a majority cause, not a minority cause. Air pollution, water shortage and pollution, technological unemployment, natural resource depletion, the slaughter of humans on the highways and many more problems are yours to help solve. You are directly involved.

Technocracy's position always has been, regardless of color, creed, religion or national origin, that the people who live on this continent are entitled to share in the abundance of goods and services that technology, is able to produce for every one of us. In Technocracy's view, no individual is "better" than another. Some have more training and capability, so, understandably, they will incur more responsibility.

No minority view can operate this Continent. It's too big, too complex. Only a social concept that comprehends the whole operation of North America and operates for all of us will function. In this complicated society, shortsighted competing minorities may put the lights out. Then, where are you, male, republican, rich or homeless?

Money Trouble

Lois M. Scheel

1995

Published in:

- Social Trends Newsletters, Mar. 1995, No. 133

See also:

Energy Accounting

VOLTAIRE: In general, the art of government consists in taking as much money as possible from one class of citizens to give to the other.

There are two subjects that will arouse and sustain interest in almost anyone: money and sex, in that order. Perhaps this is because most people do not have a satisfactory amount of either one.

There is plenty of literature on both subjects but very little basic understanding available on either, especially on the subject of money. Since concern for money is such a national

mania, a framework of understanding of it needs to be presented both as to its history and the problems it is losing today.

Until only a few years ago, money either was made of or represented the relatively scarce metals, gold and silver. The toil and sweat involved in growing food, the craftsmanship of making something or the travail of providing service for someone else was reflected in the choice of so-called precious metals to represent money.

The Sumerians of ancient Babylonia are thought first to have made silver bars to replace the barter system. This change made it possible for persons to accumulate credits against their society. The more silver bars they possessed, the more their society was indebted to them. The Lydians, another ancient Asia Minor culture, are accredited with coining money essentially as it is today. Subdivision of money from silver bars into smaller increments modified the money system of that day to make smaller purchases possible and to refine accounting.

For thousands of years money in coined form was the means of distributing a scarcity of goods and services. *It cannot be over-emphasized that human muscles and animal power, through all of this time, were getting the work done, and that money, a figment of human imagination, represented to individuals the reward for their back-breaking effort. Man-hours of work were represented in the "value" of goods and services.* Of course, the more shrewd and greedy quickly learned how to manipulate the backs and muscles of others to their personal advantage. They became the usurers we now refer to as bankers and financiers.

As time progressed, and as more numbers of people appeared on the social scene, it became more and more impractical for each individual to have his own little store of gold and silver. So deposit systems developed to store any surplus where, presumably, it was safer than in one's own possession. Of course this gave the deposit, or bank, owners the opportunity to speculate with the money of other individuals.

Paper money and checks began to make their appearance in some quantity as the Industrial Revolution developed. Precious metals tended to become further removed from individual use. By the time of the American Revolution, European banking and money handling were well advanced toward present-day procedures.

When early American settlers first saw this continent, money was a rarity among them. A temporary return to barter was the order of the day for most of them. As society took form, after the American Revolutionary War, American money made its appearance. The dollar, however, contrary to what we are taught, did not appear first in America. The first use of the word "dollar" on a coin was by the Sierra Leone Company in 1791 on the west coast of Africa (another bit of evidence that George Washington did not throw a dollar across the Potomac because dollars did not exist in America then).

What has happened to the American dollar in the past few years is rather interesting in that it no longer in any way represents precious metals, either gold or silver. American money is merely paper that is redeemable for goods and services, the price of which is arbitrarily set by government and business.

In 1934 the New Deal administration made it a crime to own gold in minted form. All gold was called into the U.S. Treasury and paper certificates were issued in place of the gold to represent equivalent dollars of purchasing power. In 1966 gold backing of the dollar was eliminated completely. Likewise, silver backing of the dollar has been eliminated. The fundamental reason for these actions is that the volume of goods and services the U.S. economy can produce is far greater than the precious metals available to cover their so-

called dollar "value." From the money system standpoint, debt had to be expanded far beyond the availability of these metals to validate this debt in order to stimulate the flow of goods and services in the economy. No economy in the history of humankind had ever before had this problem--too much in goods and services for the money available to move to the consumer. So came "easy" time payments and a host of other devices, including war, to keep the money system functioning.

The decline of precious metals in American coinage is continuing as the coin supply becomes shorter and shorter partly due to hoarding. Now copper and nickel are replacing silver in coins. In other words, American coins and money in no way represent "value" in the sense that they did in the Sumerian and Lydian cultures, in cultures today around the world or in our own culture of just a few years ago. The credit card and its association with data processing is a further departure from the age-old concept of money. The principal fight of the money system right now is to somehow maintain the differential advantage of income among individuals. This notion is based on the preconception that some individuals are worth more than others and therefore ought to have more.

A basic question is: If money once represented man-hours of toil in producing goods and services under conditions of scarcity, what does it represent in this economy where the work is being done by machines that have produced an abundance? The answer is: Money today represents nothing more than an invidious distinction between individuals and is an inefficient means of moving goods and services. Hardly anyone is "earning" a living these days.

Abundance, as Technocracy has always pointed out, would eliminate the money system in spite of any effort made to preserve the system. Technology is doing the work, not human sweat. This course of events has a profound meaning to the people of this continent. This is the only civilization in the records of history that literally is running out of money, in the historic meaning of money, to move its goods and services. A new measure of the flow of goods and services, fortunately, is ready and waiting to replace money.

Technocracy's Energy Accounting design, which is a vastly superior "credit card" for personal use, is designed to eliminate completely the bottlenecks that money creates by impeding the flow of goods and services with the cash register and other devices to collect money. The Energy Accounting design will measure the flow of energy required by the individual from North America's industrial machine to enable the technologist to see that the people of this continent get what they need and want, when and where they want it. [The Energy Certificate/Energy Accounting.Technate system.](#)

The Mud Of The Last Ditch

Stella Block

1996

Published in:

- Technocracy Digest, 2nd quarter 1996, No. 320

The Mud Of The Last Ditch

Howard Scott stated, in the Hotel Pierre address (1932), that the time would come when "the liberal" (the last resort of the incompetent and stupid), the debt merchant, and the communist, fighting together in defense of a system of advantage.....will have little or no solace save the mud of the last ditch wherein they now struggle so valiantly."

We are now witnessing this strange phenomenon -- exemplified by the current (grotesque) "presidential campaign." The line of demarcation between the two parties has been blurred to near extinction. It is also exemplified by the screaming headlines of the "downsizing of business" by layoffs of personnel to secure the profits of corporations. Popular periodicals such as *NEWSWEEK* and *BUSINESS WEEK* have used this as their "cover stories." Thousands of white collar workers are no longer catching the early commuter trains into the big cities, while the salaries of CEOs climb into the millions, and the stock market is climbing into the "wild blue yonder." Even the staid *NEW YORK TIMES* has devoted a series of articles to the "Downsizing of America" describing in detail the pain and suffering of the victims of the "downsizing." Why?

In 1933 Howard Scott wrote "Technology Smashes the Price System" which was published in a 1933 issue of *HARPER'S MAGAZINE*. The stock market crash of 1929 was the massive "heart attack" of the Price System. It has been kept alive only by all manner of artificial means: By the order of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, millions of acres of cotton were plowed under; millions of little pigs were killed; mounds of oranges were sprayed with crude oil to make them inedible -- all to maintain scarcity for the benefit of profits for business. World War II was a made-to-order life-line -- production of war materiel for all the Allies, and then some. Hundreds of thousand tons of war material -- tanks, trucks, weapons, etc., etc., were dumped into the Pacific Ocean just to get rid of them. This ordnance was made of non-renewable resources -- then shipped out and dumped. Then came the "Korean Police Action," followed by the Vietnam War -- both very lucrative actions for "business."

The wanton, obscene waste of natural resources in all these actions has never been headlined as is the current effects of the "downsizing of America." To keep the record straight, corporations are not the only institutions that are "downsizing:" Government, in the tug-of-war between the two political parties, are eliminating whole departments in an effort to "balance the budget" and "cut the Federal bureaucracy."

What is really going on? At no time in history has the human race faced such a dilemma as it is facing today! Not even the wild animals of prehistoric times of man's beginnings ever posed such a threat to human existence. Man's discovery of the use of fire helped him in his fight for survival against creatures bigger and stronger than he. It took many thousands of years from the discovery of fire, to the use of extraneous energy (Watt's steam engine, 1775) in his struggle against hunger, but it did happen. The development of technology began slowly at first, but it has accelerated to the point where man has become completely

dependent on the continuous operation of extraneous energy and technological operation for his survival as a species.

It is a tragic irony of historical proportions that, on this Continent particularly, we have developed our technology to the point where we can provide for every citizen the wherewithal to live comfortably without the age-old fear of starvation and deprivation -- but we face extinction because we cannot let go of old concepts and habits.

-- Stella Block
Continental Headquarters, Technocracy Inc.

Editorial Comment – January, 2008

Barbara Ehrenreich's Bait and Switch

a review from Technocracy's perspective

By Pam Gill

Barbara Ehrenreich's book Bait and Switch (2005) follows the pattern of her last and best-selling book Nickel and Dimed. For both these books she concealed her real identity and went job hunting for purposes of reporting back on that search, the working conditions, salaries, quality of life issues, and a small, but telling, slice of what workers go through. Nickel and Dimed sheds light on the blue-collar world and Bait and Switch does likewise for the college-educated, white-collar world. It is a beautiful piece of work except when she comes to prescribing what we might do about the well-documented and sorry situation that prevails for American workers.

Barbara Ehrenreich has a fabulous sense of humor, an easy and readable writing style, and an insightful and honest perspective on the fairly grim subjects of job hunting and making ends meet. In Bait and Switch she looks for most of a year and does not even get a job offer which meets her minimal requirements: around \$50,000/year and benefits. She markets herself as quite experienced in public relations, speech writing, event planning and execution, university teaching of these subjects, and communications.

Unless one is personally looking, it would be hard to imagine or appreciate the extent of the "hired help" available to facilitate a job search. This help seems to know no bounds: resume writing, career coaching, grooming, networking clubs, church meetings for the unemployed, and seminars on unintelligible topics ["Funding Emerging Growth: Venture Capital and Other Strategies" or "semiotics"]. Ehrenreich puts out thousands of dollars to enlist this help, fashioning herself and her resume. Still no job. The paid helpers subtly reinforce the unreasonable position that if you don't have a job it is your fault.

Ehrenreich comments that ". . .from the point of view of the economic 'winners'-- those who occupy powerful and high paying jobs--the view that one's fate depends entirely on oneself must be remarkably convenient. It explains the winner's success in the most flattering terms while invalidating the complaints of the losers." (p.85). This sorry philosophy makes job seekers that much less likely to feel confident or to confide in one another.

Of course, the whole point is to be a winner, and nothing comes cheaply. The career coaches stress "networking" (asking everyone you know, or can possibly go out and strong arm, to help you find a job). Those coaches, claiming to hold the keys to employment, sometimes go so far as to sell their own contacts. Ehrenreich once ponies up for that

access, but it doesn't pan out. When she is finally offered a sales job, it provides no benefits, looks really depressing, and requires a rather substantial financial investment to get started. So, she turns it down as it doesn't meet her original, minimal requirements.

Nevertheless, in the United States we are to assume we might become winners at any moment. . . if that status wasn't conferred on us by birth, extreme good fortune, or unusually recognized genius. For the college-educated, taking low-paying and unchallenging work is to be seen as only temporary, even if it may not be. Such jobs are a source of shame and impoverishment. Even blue-collar workers are mightily encouraged to imagine success is lurking somewhere in the future re: a promotion, some training, the lottery, some type of "killing," a wealthy mate, etc. Ehrenreich's books put the lie to these fantasies.

The job market is tough, youth oriented, and often swayed by "who knows who" rather than a healthier "who knows what." Ehrenreich uses such words as "fascism" (p. 89), "cruel and perverse" (p. 232) to describe the realities of the job market. The trauma of job hunting has scarred many a poor soul. Though Ehrenreich tries to maintain the distance of a social scientist, she is human and being treated like a "loser" isn't easy.

The choice of jobs available, regardless of whether a person gets them or not, isn't an easy thing to face either. Some companies have less than sterling reputations; some companies hire legions of people just to do damage control around the scandals their practices or CEO's have generated. Gambling and prisons are big growth industries; the management of mercenaries and service providers who interface with our troops around the world is another field with openings. For a person who wishes to contribute to the welfare of society, which is most of us, there can be some tough choices. Ehrenreich offers a sampling of what is out there in her descriptions of job fairs.

As an investigative reporter, Ehrenreich devotes most the book to an intelligent description of what she personally goes through. And it is not pretty. In one chapter, she performs a valuable service in submitting herself to the outreach of fundamentalist churches who use the difficulties of job searching to recruit members. These well-organized institutions offer group meetings for job hunters to ostensibly gather help, network, and meet some employed folks. Their mindless offerings aren't a practical help. (Is God really running an employment agency?) At one enormous church with operations on many fronts and floors, she failed to even see a cross on display. Business is business. From what Ehrenreich documents, one can assume homophobia, racism, and sexism are business as usual.

Given the sad state of affairs that Ehrenreich unveils for us, what does she propose we do to remedy this ugly situation? She pleads for the job seekers (all of us at some point in our lives) to talk honestly with each other. Take a long look at what is going on in the job market, organize, demand better unemployment and health benefits. She looks to Northern European countries for a model to strive after. She has amply displayed that "If anyone can testify credibly to the decline of the American dream, it is the white-collar unemployed--the people who 'played by the rules,' 'did everything right,' and still ended up in ruin." (p.237).

The slim suggestions she makes let down the reader who is by this point ready to attack the profit-driven system which seems to concentrate its paltry job offerings in mostly very unsavory areas and leaves the general population gasping for a little common decency. She is correct that we need to speak the truth as best we can figure it out. We need to conclude that demanding better unemployment benefits and universal health care is not going to get them for us. Those from whom we are suppose to "demand" these things are unwilling and unable to give them. Repeated failure to get these benefits despite sincere and concerted attempts should have convinced us by now that such demands are not going to be met.

Even the Northern European model, which leaves much to be desired, is not going to be forthcoming from our increasingly fascistic government--all three branches of it.

Through e-mail, we currently have the means to deliver to our government hundreds of thousands of protesting messages on an incredible variety of topics. And we do send them. We can raise our voices till we turn blue in the face. . . and march. . . and call . . . and pay lobbyists (never nearly as much as our opposition can though). . . and get peacefully arrested. . . and get violent (God forbid!). This socioeconomic system and those who run it are not capable of hearing and acting on the basic needs of North Americans.

We need another socioeconomic system, one that is not run by ridiculously wealthy politicians who are elected in vacuous popularity contests, contests which are grossly manipulated at best and fraudulent at worst. And it is not a moral question of electing more upstanding and pure individuals. What needs replacing is the system under which we live. Technocracy Inc. proposes a new socioeconomic system.

At the risk of sounding Utopian, which Technocracy is not, under the proposed Technocratic system, people would receive an education which suited their particular talents and interests. There would be full employment in jobs which would promote the health and happiness of the general population. Networking for jobs would be a reasonable thing to do because income would not be tied to jobs.

Putting people into jobs simply because they don't have one would be ludicrous, as would the practice of nepotism. Knowing a person and what he or she is good at, though, could facilitate finding the right person for the right position. Energy accounting would be used to distribute the goods and services, with all citizens of the North American Continent receiving equal access. Again, Technocracy has no illusions that our society can be perfect and all problems solved, but we could do so much better than we are doing now.

There are many details which can be anticipated in such a socioeconomic system and some which cannot. There is much Technocracy literature written over the last 75 years of its existence. A good place to begin reading is on the web site. Or write for literature.

The world of the job seeker, which Ehrenreich describes so poignantly, is tough and getting tougher. The educated talent wasted is just plain bizarre as classrooms remain overcrowded and under-taught, as much mental illness is inadequately treated, as poverty and violence permeate many neighborhoods. The situation is understandable, but we won't be able to tolerate it much longer. We need those job seekers working to improve our society. We and our friends and relatives ARE those people.

It does not have to be the way it is. Ehrenreich says, "The tragedy is that they could be doing so much more." (p.235). I wish Ehrenreich could see how much more "they" and "we" could be doing. Investigate Technocracy and see for yourself.

For further understanding of the Technate design and its science applied to society program read the last two chapters of the Technocracy Study Course.

The chapters leading up to the design of the Technate are an overview of science. The last two chapters of the Study Course outline the actual design of the Technate of and for North

America. [Technocracy Study Course.](#)

[The North American Technate TNAT](#) [The North American Technate TNAT](#)
